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Thursday, February 19, 2015

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PAGE 8

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PAGE 11

New care centre to bring in more jobs

THIRTY jobs will be created when an urgent care centre opens at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital in April.

The new service, accessed via the emergency department, will replace the existing walk-in centre at Holly Hall and is expected to treat more than 160,000 patients a year. It is hoped the centre will help to reduce pressure on A&E.

Malling Health has been awarded the five-year £18million contract to run the 24/7 service.

Some 30 clinical and non-clinical workers will move to the new base. New staff will be recruited to take to total up to 60.

Dr Steve Mann, from Dudley CCG said: "The walk-in centre at Holly Hall will close on March 31. From this date, all patients who think they have an emergency medical problem should go to the urgent care centre."

"We are confident this will offer a real improvement in care for all patients."

More than 3,000 people responded to a consultation on the closure of the walk-in centre, while hundreds of people signed a petition calling for it to remain open.

Dudley CCG says the urgent care service will be better as it will open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Smoke alert for woman

AN elderly woman was treated by paramedics after her Halesowen home filled with smoke.

Firefighters believe the kettle had boiled dry. Crews from Dudley and Haden Cross went to the house in Lea Bank Road at about 8pm on Monday.

The woman was checked by medics, but did not require hospital treatment.

Firefighters ventilated the house and made sure it was safe. Steven Hunter, of Dudley fire station, said: "There were no visible flames."

RUBBISH PILE FLATS SCHEME

Dig deep for artwork in aid of garden



Volunteer Barry Page, with the watercolour that is to be sold towards the renovation of the walled garden

A PAINTING, believed to be by a well-known artist, will go under the hammer to raise cash for the restoration of a historic walled garden.

The artwork has been donated to the Halesowen Abbey Trust to support an ongoing project to restore the garden at grade-I listed Leasowes Park in Halesowen to its former glory.

Project leader Mick Freer said the painting needed to be re-framed, which would also give them the opportunity to verify the name of the artist.

"We have an idea who the artist is but don't want to say until it has been confirmed" he said.

"Once the painting has been re-framed and all the work done we will be putting the painting up for auction.

"At the moment we don't know if this will be through an auction house or something we will do for ourselves."

Mr Freer said the painting had been

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Initiative a Sunday best for retailers

MORE than 70 shops and market stalls opened in Dudley on Sunday in the wake of damaging losses from an English Defence League protest.

Up to 2,500 visitors dropped into the town centre for the special fun day.

It was organised by Dudley Council to give the town a boost. Many shops had closed the previous Saturday while 600 people from the far right group walked through the town.

Dudley ambassador Nikki Cheung, who helped organise the event, said 75 businesses opened for the fun day, including 25 that would not normally open on a Sunday.

She said: "I am so pleased. We had no idea when we were setting up this initiative how well supported it will be."

There were activities for children, including a funfair, balloon modelling, treasure trail and face painting and Black Country Radio set up a stage for live music.



The rubbish mounts up

Environmental Agency is now involved and the problem is acknowledged by the people responsible for the site."

Now developer J and V Kelly Ltd has submitted the flats proposal.

Replenish

The agent acting on its behalf, Marson Rathbone Taylor Architects, said the development would rid the area of an 'appalling site' and 'replenish' the area.

A design and access statement submitted with the plans said: "The site has become under utilised allowing the waste pile to gradually become larger, causing a nuisance and health hazard to the site and local area.

The renovation project has already unearthed a number of hidden gems - including doorways dating back to the 18th century.

Mr Freer said renovation of the land, the pile of rubbish has caused disturbances to the local people and started a campaign to remove the rubbish.

"The appalling site has become a huge problem and needs to be removed, the

"This is a good sign as far as I'm concerned because it shows somebody is listening to what people want. We do need good-quality housing in the area.

"It has gone on for far too long. It has been there so long vegetation has grown on it, and it is costing the council money having to monitor the site."

Record votes for honours

AN awards scheme honouring unsung community heroes in Dudley has received a record response.

Some 167 nominations have been submitted for the first six categories of Mayor's Civic Awards - the highest in its 12 years.

Nominations for those categories has now closed and the winners will be announced in March but people can still vote for the Mayor's Award - before February 27 at www.dudley.gov.uk/civicawards

CONTENTS

Peter Rhodes	4
Letters	9
Club news	10
Memory Lane	16
What's On	24
TV Listings	25-27
Brain Gym	28
Property	29
Motoring	20
Sport	39 & 40

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HALESOWEN CHRONICLE

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Cab app Uber arrives in West Midlands

IT'S the new way to hail a cab and it's all done with the touch of a button on a smartphone — controversial taxi company Uber has arrived in Birmingham.

The operation sees customers download an app, which allows them to order a car directly from the nearest driver and get details of the estimated waiting time and journey cost.

There are no telephone calls as everything is done through the app in moments.

GPS is used to put passengers in touch with the closest drivers to the pick-up location.

The second city has become the fourth in the UK to be targeted by the American firm which now operates in more than 50 countries.

The app works out the cost of

journeys and cab drivers say it is the same as using a taxi meter, which only black cabs are legally entitled to use.

But Uber hasn't been welcomed everywhere. Thousands of cabbies in London brought the capital to a standstill last summer as they protested against the smartphone app.

Uber has also faced protests from other taxi firms in the past over its

registration as a car-sharing business, meaning it does not face the same legislation and checks as taxis.

The company was banned in New Delhi last year over rape allegations against one of its drivers. It has since added a panic button and tracking features to its taxi hailing app in India.

It launched for customers in Birmingham and Solihull last week.

Rock star plant in support of JB's book

LED Zeppelin icon Robert Plant is backing the release of a book about Dudley's famous JB's rock club.

Plant is following the likes of Jasper Carrott and ELO frontman Bev Bevan in getting snapped with a copy of JB's: The Story of Dudley's Legendary Live Music Venue, which was released in December.

Author Geoff Tristram, who performed at the club himself in the 70s, said Plant was more than happy to be photographed with the glossy paperback after one of the book's contributors, Roy Williams, a former sound engineer of Plant's, put him in touch.

Other stars pictured with the book include Ruby Turner and Ricky Cool.

It details the club's history from its humble beginnings at Dudley FC's former home stadium, to showcasing some of the biggest bands of recent times, including The Police, Dire Straits and The Pretenders.

"The people that spent their youth in JB's have spread out across the world but are still interested in remembering the history of the club," said Mr Tristram.

"We want everybody and anybody who remembers JB's and buys this book to send us their picture."

Tales of the Wonder Stuff

THE Wonder Stuff frontman Miles Hunt will share his rock 'n' roll tales at a book reading in Wolverhampton.

The indie legend, from Stourbridge, will be reading from his book, The Wonder Stuff Diaries 86-89 at the Slade Rooms from 8pm on April 5.

Hunt will play a handful of songs at the 'intimate and personal' reading as well as taking questions from the audience.

Tickets are £16.50, from Midland Box Office on 0870 320 7000 or online at www.wolvescivic.co.uk

Meet the brewer

A STOURBRIDGE pub will feature beers from a new Halesowen brewery from March 2 to 8. There will also be a chance to meet the brewer from Fixed Wheel Brewery at the Chequers Inn, a JD Wetherspoons pub, in High Street on Monday, March 2 at 7pm.

Decision sees taxi fares frozen for a 13th year

TAXI fares in the Dudley borough will be frozen for a 13th year running after a council agreed to freeze licensing charges.

Shaz Saleem, chairman of Dudley Private Hire and Taxi Association, had warned that cab companies may have had to pass on any extra cost to their customers if a proposed raise in licence fees went ahead.

Blue plaque honour for ELO musician

A BLUE plaque honouring Electric Light Orchestra's Kelly Groucutt was set to be given the nod this week.

The family of the bass player and occasional singer asked for the English Heritage plaque to be placed on the house in Gough Road, Coseley, where he grew up.

The request was being earmarked for approval by Councillor Hilary Bills, Dudley Council's cabinet member for environment and culture, ahead of a meeting yesterday (Wednesday).

It will be the sixth blue plaque installed in Dudley and the first to be placed on a privately-owned property. The property's current owners have backed the request.

Groucutt, who lived in Coseley from 1945-67, died in 2009 from a heart attack. The Groucutt family lived in Gough Road from 1937-92. Kelly was born on September 8 1945.

Under the usual criteria, the person being honoured should have died a minimum of 15 years prior to an application being made. But council officials say the guidelines provide for exceptional circumstances — such as when an individual connected with the borough has an international reputation.

But last week Dudley Council's taxis committee rejected the rate rise of between two and five per cent.

However, the freeze in licensing fees will mean the council will be subsidising the taxi service by £3,000 a year.

Following the meeting, Mr Saleem said: "This decision means we won't be increasing the fares for our customers."

"For over 12 years now we have kept our fees the same in Dudley."

Struggling

"One hundred per cent of the firms have not been charging double over the Christmas period because we acknowledge that our customers have been struggling."

"A lot of our customers have had the same wage for the last couple of years and the fact that Dudley Council has not put its fees up all means we don't have to increase our fees as well to cover our costs."

He added: "I would like to say a big thank you first of all to the members who have supported the association. I would like to thank Dudley Council, in my view, for making history. I can't remember a time when fees have actually been frozen and we welcome the move."

"I think it is important that Dudley Council and Dudley Private Hire and Taxi Association work together and today is a step towards that."

Concert in Christina's memory

From left, Dave Williamson, Matt Green of Bittersweet Revenge, Scout leader Neil Hobson, assistant leader Emma Tedstone and J.B. of Vicious Nature

A ROCK concert is to be held in memory of murdered teenager Christina Edkins. Organisers hope to raise funds to improve the community where she went to school.

Local bands will perform on stage at the March 14 event which has been organised by Dave Williamson, a friend of Christina's father.

Money will be used to begin the refurbishment of Halesowen's scout hut in Mucklow Hill.

The 16-year-old was stabbed to death on a bus on the way to school in March 2013.

She had been due to sit a GCSE mock exam at Leasowes High School in Halesowen as she worked towards becoming a nurse.

Mr Williamson said: "I never knew Christina but when I found out who it was I felt grief. It was almost like I'd lost one of my own family."

Mr Williamson estimates around £40,000 is needed to fund the complete revamp of the scout hut.

Tickets for a Night of Rock in Memory of Christina Edkins can be bought from www.theasylumvenue.co.uk

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Mosque appeal returns to court

The latest chapter in the legal battle over plans for a new mosque in Dudley is taking place with an appeal to be heard in London this week.

Dudley Muslim Association and Dudley Council were due at the Court of Appeal for a two-day hearing starting on Tuesday.

The council launched a legal bid to reclaim land in Han Street, which had been earmarked for a new multi-million pound mosque. The association lost its initial appeal against the bid but it's taking its case to the Court of Appeal.

Curry cash helps the Eagles soar

Money has been raised for a football club to buy life-saving equipment thanks to charity curry nights. Wall Heath's Alain International Restaurant, in Albion Parade, organised two curry evenings to help bring in vital funds for Kewford Eagles FC.

Hundreds of young footballers play for the club's 45 teams, aged from six to 18. A total of £1,634 was raised to buy a defibrillator for home ground Eagle Park, in Swindon Road, Wall Heath.

Singer's illness postpones gig

CHINA In Your Hands hit-makers T'Paul had to cancel their concert at Bilston's Robin 2 on Saturday (February 14) after lead singer Carol Decker was taken ill.

The show will be rescheduled for a future date and ticket holders can call the box office on 01902 401211 for further information. Tickets can be kept for the rescheduled date or refunded.

Dates announced for beer festival

THE annual Black Country Beer Festival at Lye Cricket Club will take place from August 13 to 15.

The number of ales, cider and perries available will increase from 80 to 100.

Organisers from the club and Lye brewery Sadler's Ales have selected the Royal British Legion as the festival charity.

Rowing course

PEOPLE can learn how to row in a course run by Dudley Water Sports Centre. A six-week course starts on March 22, from 10am to noon at Lodge Farm Reservoir, Highbridge Road, Netherton.

Suspended sentence for man in bar attack

Harry Nottingham

A THUG who smashed a bar stool over a man's head in a Coseley pub has avoided an immediate jail term.

Recorder Ciaran Rankin told Lloyd Gould he had escaped prison 'by the skin of his teeth' following the attack in the Painters Arms.

Prosecuting, Mr Edward Soulsby told Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that Gould, aged 38, of Summerhill Road, was out with his father on August 24 when a man asked him to buy him a drink. He refused and the victim called him names. Gould then launched the attack after the man argued with his father.

CCTV footage showed him sending the victim sprawling at the bar with a blow to the head. A volley of kicks and punches followed, then Gould smashed a bar stool over his head. The victim suffered black eyes, cuts and swelling to his face.

Mr Richard Franck, defending, said: 'Gould was ashamed and apologetic.'

Gould admitted assault occasioning actual bodily harm. He was jailed for eight months, suspended for two years with two years supervision and a three month curfew. He must pay £500 compensation and complete 100 hours of unpaid work.

Councillors' fees to rise

COUNCILLORS in Dudley borough have received a 2.2 per cent rise in their allowances - despite the authority having to make £27 million of cuts.

Councillors have been given the rise to keep pace with the increase in wages for council workers.

The basic allowance will increase from £9,393 to approximately £9,600.

UKIP councillors have rejected the offer, saying the money should be spent on front line services instead.

Councillor Paul Brothwood described the hike as an 'insult' to the taxpayers of Dudley borough.'

Prayer hall 'no'

A PLAN to create a prayer hall and community centre for Muslims in Old Hill has been refused by councillors over a lack of parking spaces. Concerns were raised over the building in Halesowen Road as just 30 parking spaces would have been created.

History dig could delay start of work on car park

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL dig will need to take place before a £2.5 million car park can be built in Dudley town centre.

Work on the 250-space multi-storey in Tower Street must wait for the investigations to be carried out. Dudley Council says it wants to examine the site because it has been occupied since mediaeval times. The site earmarked for the car park is next to the Grade II listed Baylies Hall and opposite Dudley College's Dudley Evolve campus.

The plan aims to attract more people to the town centre by increasing the amount of parking.

Designs for the car park will be submitted to Dudley Council in March, depending on what the archaeologists unearth after work on the dig starts this week.

Transport boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: 'It's very important that we carry out full investigations of the land before any works start on the site.'

'We have appointed archaeologists to carry out appropriate investigations in case there are any substantial finds from the mediaeval period.'

'I hope any discoveries won't adversely affect our time-line for getting the work started on this much-needed car park.'

Archaeologists have also been at Dudley Market where work is taking place on a £6.7m scheme. Experts uncovered shells of oysters, which were a popular fast food 400 years ago, and dozens of bottles of shoe polish dating back to the 1700s were discovered.

It is hoped the car park will prove popular for shoppers visiting the new-look market.

New stalls, canopies and lighting will help breathe new life into the market as part of the overhaul.

In the pink for next showbiz production



Pink Productions are about to start auditions at The Mill Theatre in Sedgley as Grace Tolley, aged 11, points the way PERFORMERS are needed to take part in a new show featuring songs and dance numbers from musicals.

Pink Productions, whose former members include One Direction star Liam Payne, will stage Blockbuster at Sedgley's Mill Theatre in June. The group is on the search for both children and adults to perform in the show.

Open auditions will be held at Holy Trinity Church Hall, in Farrington Road, Lanesfield, Wolverhampton, on Sunday. They will be split into two sessions, under-13s from 1pm to 2pm and 13-and-over 2.30pm to 4pm.

The show itself will have six separate segments featuring songs from the musicals Wicked, Walking on Sunshine, Aladdin, Barnum, Fame and Newsies.

Rehearsals for the show, will be held at the church hall every Sunday between 1pm and 6pm.

Company director and choreographer Jodie Richards said between 80 and 100 performers usually took part in the shows.

'We are looking for both children and adults to take part in Blockbuster, which will feature the best bits from some of the biggest musicals,' she said.

'People auditioning do not need to have previous experience of performing in shows. But they must be willing to commit the time needed to rehearse.'

Miss Richards said anyone who wanted more information could call her on 07763 847811. Otherwise attend on the day.

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GREAT coincidences of our time. Newly-extended limit for sales of high-interest pensioner bonds: May 2015. Date of next General Election: May 2015

WE all have our individual stagger-threshold, the point at which we are staggered by things. Martin Wheatley, chief executive of the Financial Conduct Authority, seems to have a very low one. He told the Commons Treasury Select Committee: "I think it's quite clear that the number of scandals that we've seen in financial services, particularly in banks, has been staggering." Mr Wheatley is staggered only because he seems to believe that bankers are fine upstanding people who enter the moneylending profession in order to spread happiness and prosperity among their fellow men. If, on the other hand, you believe a significant number of bankers are a shower of shysters whose only interest is getting as rich as possible as fast as possible, you will not be quite so staggered. When the Crown Prosecution Service pursues crooked bankers as eagerly as it chases benefits cheats, things may change. Not before.

TERMS for our time. A self-build project in London invites would-be home owners to put in 500 hours of manual labour as part of their deposit on the property. It is called sweat equity.

THEY still don't get it, do they? Rachel Reeves, Labour's shadow work and pensions secretary, was banging on about the benefits of a full month's paternity leave. She declared: "Good employers like Asda, National Grid and Citibank are already giving more than the statutory paternity leave." She referred repeatedly to "good employers." After a while you twigged that when Ms Reeves says "good employers" what she actually means is "big employers." Reeves worked as an economist at the Bank of England which may make her an expert on big business but she clearly hasn't a clue about the nightmarish pressures facing small firms. Ninety-six per cent of all businesses in Britain employ fewer than 10 people and if they despair at trying to juggle the shifts to accommodate yet more statutory leave, it's because they're small, not bad.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

A STEEL processing firm has been fined £12,000 after a worker suffered horrific injuries when his arm was trapped in a machine.

Matthew Collins was cleaning rotating rollers at Cooper and Jackson Ltd in Brierley Hill when his arm was pulled between them.

A colleague attempted to free him by reversing the rollers but when he pressed the reverse button Mr Collins was instead dragged in further, up to his shoulder.

The 42-year-old, from Stourbridge, suffered a punctured lung as well as fractures to five ribs, his collarbone, shoulder blade and elbow. He also suffered serious burns to his chest, caused by the rollers coming into contact with his skin.

He was in hospital for more than a month and was later re-admitted following an infection.

Counselling

Mr Collins has been unable to work since and is having counselling for post-traumatic stress.

A Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation into the March 20, 2014 incident found the company had not carried out a risk assessment for the cleaning of the machine, which presses steel. It also found staff had not been trained in how to clean the machine safely.

Magistrates in Dudley were told the company, on

the Pedmore Road Industrial Estate, failed to ensure the safety of its employees.

Paul Cooper, prosecuting on behalf of the HSE, said it was known by some staff that the machine's reverse button was not working.

The court heard Cooper and Jackson bosses had compiled fully with the investigation and had since ensured the factory met relevant safety standards.

Andrew Roach, defending, told magistrates: "There is now a safe system in place to ensure no such accident happens again."

"My client accepts the system in place was not what it should have been. It is the hope of both the company and Mr Collins that he will be able to return to work."

The firm pleaded guilty to breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act and must also pay £1,181 in court costs.

Metal album revamp goes



A MUSICIAN has gone viral on the internet with his attempt to breathe new life into an album by one of rock's top bands.

Daryl Gardner, 25, from Kingswinford, was joined by fellow musicians Chris Dando and Dave Cox to record their version of St Anger, the influential 2003 album by heavy metal masters Metallica.

Daryl's version of the album has gained more than 700,000 views on YouTube in under a month. Daryl, who played all the instruments, said: "I was only around 12 years old when I heard the album for the first time. It opened up the band to me, something I have benefited greatly from musically."

"I am not a drummer so I had to learn all the tracks through air drumming on my way to work. Dave did a great job on the vocals, people have commented on how much he sounds like James Hetfield from the band."

"I have heard through a friend of the band's sound engineer that the group themselves have heard and were impressed."

Measures 'will not stop the bullying'

A FORMER Dudley hospital worker says new government measures to help NHS whistleblowers speak up over concerns will do nothing to stop staff being victimised.

All NHS trusts will have to appoint a guardian to help whistleblowers in England and a National Independent Officer will be appointed to oversee disputes, under reforms proposed by Sir Robert Francis.

But no hospital bosses will face action over historical cases where whistleblowers have been bullied or forced to leave their jobs for speaking out.

David Ore, aged 58, claimed he lost his job at Dudley Group of Hospitals after he alleged patients were being inappropriately restrained. An investigation cleared the hospital of any wrongdoing and the trust said he lost his job for gross misconduct. He settled of court but is still out of work.

Mr Ore said: "I don't think this report will make a blind bit of difference."

And he is disappointed that a new National Independent Officer will not be tasked with investigating historical cases such as his.

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said legislation to ensure whistleblowers were not discriminated against when they went for other jobs would be introduced.

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NHS Vouchers Welcome



Graffiti problem prompts clean-up

GRAFFITI sprayed on buildings in Stourbridge town centre, including the hoarding outside a new hotel, has prompted a clean up pledge.

Bosses at Dudley Council have vowed to remove graffiti daubed on buildings including walls at Stourbridge Town Hall and electrical boxes in Coventry Street.

More has been sprayed on hoardings near the new Premier Inn, off Birmingham Street.

Members of Stourbridge Township Council raised the issue with councillors at a meeting last week.

Quickly

Dudley Councillor Khursheed Ahmed urged people to report any problems.

He said: "We rely on people reporting issues to us and our street cleaning team will act quickly to clean up this vandalism."

"Through our Love Your Community campaign, we are committed to ensuring borough residents live in a clean environment and the authority will not tolerate anti-social behaviour such as graffiti."

"We would ask people to report graffiti to us at Dudley Council Plus on 0300 555 2345."

"All of our clean-up work is costing the taxpayer money so we would also urge people to call the police."

Mr Beardwell said: "This was unprovoked road rage

Road rage thug is given suspended jail sentence

A DRIVER launched a savage road rage attack on a Dudley lawyer and his brother.

Aaron Hayes saw red when the other motorist accidentally blocked his path at The Inhedge, Dudley, at around 2.30pm on July 25, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

The 32-year-old jammed his hand on the horn and hurled abuse at Dudley solicitor Mr Tahir Mahmood who then stalled his car 'in panic' while trying to move out of the way.

Mr Philip Beardwell, prosecuting, said this gave Hayes the opportunity to leap out of his saloon car and race to the other vehicle, where he punched Mr Mahmood through the open side window.

Sibling

The attack switched to the stunned victim's brother Mr Shahid Khalil when he got out to help his injured sibling. Hayes punched Mr Khalil so savagely in the face that his cheek was cut so badly that the man will be scarred for life.

The defendant drove away but was traced through the registration number of his red Vauxhall Vectra.

Trouble flared when Hayes could not immediately turn right because the vehicle of Mr Mahmood was trapped in slow oncoming traffic, the court was told.

Mr Beardwell said: "This was unprovoked road rage

that left two people in pain, one of whom had a significant injury that will scar him for life."

Mr Timothy Talbot-Webb, defending, said: "This was completely out of character. He was in pain from a shoulder injury and was sleeping in his car after splitting with his partner of 14 years. This left him in a mood where a man faced with a relatively minor traffic incident behaved in the way described."

Hayes from Coombe Avenue, Weymouth admitted assault and assault causing actual bodily harm. He was given a six month jail term suspended under supervision for a year, handed a two month night time curfew and ordered to pay £1,350 costs and compensation.

Recorder Ciaran Rankin told him: "Your previous good character and early guilty plea have kept you out of prison."

Zoo programme ahead of schedule



Dudley Zoo chief executive Peter Suddock in the refurbished bear ravine

RESTORATION of an iconic animal enclosure at Dudley Zoo dating back to the 1930s is months ahead of schedule and is already nearing completion.

Finishing touches are being made to the bear ravine at the Castle Hill attraction, and Kiosk One, with the bulk of the project now finished. Work was originally due for completion nearer to Easter.

The timescale means workers have been able to move on to another of the site's Tecton structures, the sealion enclosure.

The repair programme will take around 12 weeks to complete – with a full week needed to clean the left side of the Sealion Pool.

Officials said they would look at increasing the number of sealions at the attraction following completion of the restoration. Bosses also plan to begin work on the old reptiliary once restoration of the Sealion Pool has been completed.

Spokesman Jill Hitchman said: "We are months ahead of schedule. This allows us to now begin on other projects."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dog owner hit with court bill of £385

A DOG walker has been handed a £385 bill for not cleaning up after his pet.

Mark Stevens, aged 53, was spotted by Dudley Council officers allowing his dog to foul in Shirley Road, Dudley, last July.

He failed to clean up after his pet and was issued with a £50 fixed penalty notice but failed to pay.

Stevens, of Crowmeole, Shrewsbury, ignored a reminder letter and also failed to turn up to Dudley magistrates court. He was found guilty in his absence.

He was issued with a £70 fine, £295 costs and a £20 victim support charge.

Councillor Hilary Bills, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "If people fail to clean up after their pets we will prosecute them."

Law firm's £30k boost for charity

FUNDRAISERS at a Black Country law firm have raised almost £30,000 for The Prince's Trust.

Higgs & Sons has been raising money for the charity during the past two years with events ranging from a quiz to all-stars football match against Aston Villa.

Tim Jones of the Brierley Hill-based firm said: "We have been absolutely delighted to have been part of The Prince's Trust in supporting young people within the Dudley area."

The law firm's chosen charity for 2015 is the Alzheimer's Society.

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with Mark Andrews

AFTER 60 years gathering metaphorical dust, the sequel to Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird will finally reach our bookshelves this summer.

No doubt English teachers across the country will be salivating with excitement, but I don't think I will be queuing to grab the first copy.

Actually, To Kill a Mockingbird, a tale of injustice and prejudice in 1930s Alabama, taught me all I know about English literature, although probably not in the way that my teachers intended.

One can only assume that those who drew up the English literature syllabus at the time thought that including a 20th century novel from across the Atlantic probably made them seem a bit trendy and edgy.

You know, 'never mind all that stuffy old Dickens, we're down with the kids and tackling real-life social issues, daddy oh!' Or words to that effect.

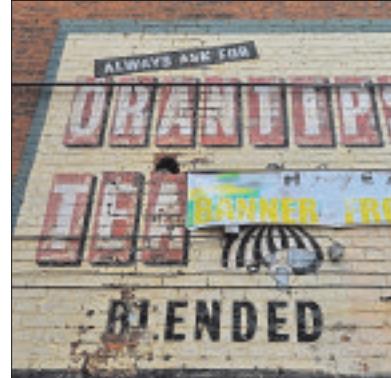
Anyway, having read the book from cover to cover, we were tasked with writing a review, outlining our thoughts on the work. And that truculent teenager that I was, I said I didn't like it. Something along the lines that it lacked nuance, and seemed to be more about pushing a personal, ideological message with the subtlety of a sledgehammer, rather than about entertaining the reader. In other words, it was a bit like EastEnders.

Oh, my teacher's reaction, I can still remember it now. The exasperation coupled with disbelief. How could I, a teenage boy, take it upon myself to criticise one of the great authors of our time? Perhaps looking back, almost three decades later, he probably had a bit of a point. But I was 15, and not given to considered opinion.

Anyway, diligent so-and-so that I was, I did as instructed, and re-wrote the review stating precisely what I was supposed to say, something about the 'mockingbird motif', whatever that was, and how beautifully drawn the characters were. "It is undoubtedly an excellent novel," was my conclusion if I remember rightly.

And it did the trick, top marks. So when it came to the next book on the syllabus, which was an even more worthy – in other words, dull – tome about apartheid in South Africa, I knew exactly what to do. I read about a third of the book; something about 'all roads lead to Johannesburg' was all I remember, which is pretty much the sort of information you can get from a road atlas. And having managed 80 or so pages, I then wrote an essay about what an excellent piece of work it was, trotting out all the establishment lines I had been directed to by my teachers. Bingo! Top marks again.

It proved to be a winning formula, which could be adapted for anything from Ted Hughes to Shakespeare. Don't have an opinion, just trot out what the academics want to hear.



Orantips Tea sign in Stafford Street, Walsall



A Harper's Ale sign in Goodall Street, Bilston



An old E&S advert in Riddings Lane, Wednesbury

**WEEK IN
POLITICS**
with Daniel Wainwright

FOR a few months at least it'll feel like the world revolves around us. If you haven't worked it out by now, then in the words of Ron Burgundy, you're 'kind of a big deal'.

The reason? You live in the West Midlands. And that means there's a very good chance you're either in a 'key marginal seat or very close to one.'

All the good news being unveiled by the coalition is targeted towards places like this. The Tories are desperate for you to hear that their 'long term economic plan' is working.

Labour, meanwhile, wants to tell you that the growth we've been experiencing is benefiting only the few and that too many of the new jobs are rather miserable, zero hours ones.

For the Conservatives, now is the time to be pulling rabbits from hats. Education secretary Nicky Morgan started her week in Walsall, touring Rivers Primary Academy, one of the schools across the country in line for a complete rebuild.

The visit was official government business and the local Labour MP David Winnick was informed. He was also told there would be no political candidate there. It turned out, however, that his Conservative opponent, the keen Douglas Hansen Luke, was there and sat with Mrs Morgan during her Press interviews.

Mr Winnick was so annoyed he tabled questions in Parliament only to be told that government officials would not be expected to be involved in arrangements with Prospective Parliamentary Candidates'.

There's certainly nothing to suggest anyone did anything they should not have done.

But incumbency has its advantages. In 2010 Gordon Brown launched the Labour manifesto from the then brand spanking new Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

He was asked if he was doing anything wrong using an NHS facility for a political launch, only to point out that at that stage the building was still held by a construction firm and had yet to be passed on to the NHS.

There are some positive things that come out at times like this as well. George Osborne, for example, wants to put £5.2 billion into the transport network in the Midlands – widening motorways, electrifying rail lines and more.

He wants to tackle the deficit we have in productivity – we have 16 per cent of the population but only 13 per cent of the economic output.

And there will be new powers on skills devolved from Westminster to local authorities, potentially to the looming combined authority for the Black Country and Birmingham. It is dangled before us as an incentive to stick with the Conservatives.

All most can do is hope the wafer thin majorities of some of the seats in the Black Country result in promises that will be kept whoever wins the election.

Signs serve as a window into past

The businesses may have long gone but they have left behind their mark, as ADAM BURLING explains

THEY hark back to a bygone era – the cheery signs, hand-painted on brickwork, extolling the virtues of everything from boots to beer.

Many advertise businesses that have long since closed down, with some of these so-called ghost signs dating back to Victorian and Edwardian times.

Some are protected and will remain for generations to come. Others have been left to fade away on gables of home and corner shops. For many passers-by these signs are just part of the landscapes – with little thought given to their significance or historical links – for others a fascinating window into the past.

Clues

Staffordshire and the Black Country are home to scores of these signs – with many featuring in a new online national archive of more than 1,000 images – set up as people delve for clues as to their origins.

One of the most noticeable in the Black Country is an advertisement for Hanson's Mild Ale on a bridge over Birmingham New Road in Dudley. Passed by thousands of drivers each day, it is in a prime location that would cost firms a small fortune to rent out nowadays.

And it even has the slogan 'A strong link with the past' penned above - a phrase which has taken on a different meaning since the firm closed in 1991, despite producing one of the Black Country's most famous milds for more than 100 years.

Overlooking Wolverhampton's ring road is a well-preserved smart black and



The Hanson's Mild Ale bridge over the Birmingham New Road, near Dudley



Sign for cough sweets Nip-A-Kofs in Wolverhampton Road, Cannock

white sign for shoemakers James Baker & Sons Ltd, on the side of the firm's old factory in Cleveland Road. The empty building is now up for let but is Grade II listed, meaning it is classed as being of 'national importance'.

Also in the city the old W Evans ironmongers sign in School Street, Wolverhampton is still preserved in brickwork, despite the shop itself being long gone.

Mystery surrounds the origins of the Ale & Porter Stores sign above a disused unit in Upper Villiers Street, Wolverhampton. Residents believe that was

the original name of the corner shop, but online forums have failed to find out any more.

Sometimes the signs do not always fit in with the business that has subsequently taken over the shop – such as The Tool Market in Great Bridge High Street that sits below an advert for Twinings Tea featuring the Little Miss Barber character.

A little girl wearing a frilly, striped dress, Little Miss Barber was also seen on adverts for Orantips Tea – including one in Stafford Street, Walsall on

the side of the 'HiRez' design and print shop. The historical importance of the sign was used in an application to add the building to the 'list of local architectural and historic interest' in Walsall in 2005/6, although it has since been partially covered by a modern advertising board.

Little Miss Barber also appears on painted advertisements for Barber's and Twinings teas in Crankhall Lane, Wednesbury and Shaftmoor Lane, Birmingham.

Elsewhere in Walsall, a Harper's Bilton Noted Ales & Stout advertisement can be seen over the Hole in the Wall fabric store in Goodall Street. It was for RA Harper's Hill Park Brewery of Bilton, which was acquired by Eley's Brewery of Stafford in 1924 and closed in 1928 when Eley's was taken over by Butler's of Wolverhampton.

Nip-a-Kofs, black cough sweets were a popular item of stock at grocery shop H Hopley's – which was opened in 1947 in Wolverhampton Road, Cannock by Hubert Hopley.

Secret

Made to a secret recipe they were a must have for Black Country workers as it offered a solution to the throat irritation from the dust in the pits.

Hangers enamel paint is another long-defunct brand that can still be seen in Walsall Road, West Bromwich. The advert urges people to buy it from Hopkins, which, it is believed, was once a hardware store in the area.

The Express & Star has an advert above the old Television and Video Centre in Riddings Lane, Wednesbury. Promoting the Wednesbury & District edition, it has become a well-known sight.

Sam, an advertising worker, became fascinated with the historic logos he saw above old buildings, so started a blog and within weeks he was inundated by people who had seen similar signs on their streets.

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It's a sweet job for the tomorrow's chocolatiers



They got a golden ticket — young chocolate apprentices Abigail Rowley and Martin Raybould, both from Dudley

TWO trainees are savouring the sweet taste of success as the first chocolate apprentices at the home of Cadbury.

Abigail Rowley and Martin Raybould, apprentice bakers with University College Birmingham (UCB), work at Cadbury-owner Mondelez International's global home for chocolate research and development at Bournville.

The chocolate-maker has previously recruited engineering and maintenance apprentices but this is the first

time post-16 trainees have been taken on at Bournville's innovation centre, where teams work behind closed doors for brands such as Cadbury Dairy Milk, Milka and Toblerone.

Opportunity

Abigail and Martin, both 19 and from Dudley, are working as junior technicians in the pilot plant production team.

Abigail said: "The apprenticeship with Mondelez is an amazing opportunity. I have always had a creative streak and want to come up with new ideas while I work here."

The apprentices receive a salary of £12,000 and are assigned their own mentors at Bournville. The two-year apprenticeships are part of a new partnership between Mondelez and UCB.

Abigail and Martin were selected having completed level 2 diplomas in professional bakery at UCB and are honing their skills as chocolatiers and confectioners.

Noel Woollard, section manager in Mondelez global product development team, said apprentices were vital for the future of the industry. "So we have decided to home-grow some talent with the help of UCB," he added.

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Steam enthusiasts in farewell to engineer Len



Len's widow June Crane from Sedgley and daughter Brigitte Brown from Wombourne at the museum farewell event

HE was a self-confessed steam fanatic so it was appropriate that a celebration of Len Crane's life was held at his spiritual home, The Black Country Living Museum in Dudley.

Around 500 attended the event alongside a dozen traction engine, following his funeral at Gornal Crematorium. Len had died in hospital after a long illness on January 5.

His wife, Jane, 74, said: "Len would have enjoyed every minute of it. It was

a wonderful day and a fantastic way of celebrating Len's life."

Born in Goole, Yorkshire, Len's family moved to West Bromwich and he attended George Salter School before a scholarship to art school

He had a 12-year career in motor-bike racing which saw him crowned British Motocross Scramble Champion in 1966 and 1967. He was also a tool maker at Great Bridge Foundry.

Len restored seven steam engines and was the main force behind several popular events, including the Black Country Living Museum's steam gathering.



Len Crane working on a steam engine

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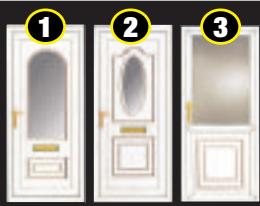
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Don't blame the Baby Boomers again

If it is a good thing to live longer, then why are we always being told that everything that goes wrong with this country is because of the ageing population?

Take the NHS, apparently we are the people in A&E causing all of their problems. This is just not true. All ages sometimes need this service but many of us of a certain age only visit when really necessary. We grew up with the knowledge that we were lucky to have a free service and did not abuse it. Unfortunately, most people today think they are entitled to everything going.

Mastering skills at an early age

THE other Sunday I heard a member of the government say that they wanted all pupils in the country to be able to do their 12 times table and write a story by the time they were 11. Is this not going back nearly three quarters of a century?

In order to pass the exam to go to the grammar school I needed to have mastered these skills, as did all of my fellow classmates. With regard to the tables most of my friends and myself had this ability at about eight or nine.

The person speaking about these plans/ideas used the word education. Schools, colleges and even universities are places of teaching and learning.

Exams seem have in the past been dumbed down and assignments make it easier to pass a course as information can be obtained from the internet and adjusted slightly.

Why not change the title of Minister for Education to, the Minister for Teaching And Learning?

D WINTERBORN
Brierley Hill

We are told that our pension is a benefit. Rubbish. We have contributed from a young age to the wealth of this country and are entitled to claim our money back. Should we need hospital care, our pension is stopped, not sure how we pay regular bills? If we do not pay our council tax, there will be a nice warm cell with a TV and three meals a day awaiting us. Baby Boomers changed this country in the 60s and if we all joined together we could do it again.

S BELL
Woodsetton

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Double trouble for traders and shoppers

IT'S good to see that one of the main roads through Dudley has been reopened and common sense prevailed at last.

But the problem with shopping in Dudley is more down to greedy councils that want double bubble payments, from both shoppers paying car park charges to park near the shops and charging business rates to shop owners as a enterprise tax for trying to run a business and employ people.

Online shopping is good for online companies as it costs the online companies practically nothing for would be shoppers to browse their web sites, car boot sales only have to pay a pittance rent to the farmer for the use of an empty field, most large stores have free parking like the Merry Hill Centre to attract customers in.

But traditional shops and markets in areas like Dudley centre have a vast range of expenses, like business rates, staff, lights, rents, insurances, etc, to pay for, as the saying goes, 'on a Monday morning'.

So what's needed is for the council to introduce a validated parking system so that if a customer actually buys something from a traditional shop or market trader, thus helping to keep the high street open, that customer gets a ticket validated at the shop or stall for free car parking, thus creating a level playing field. Simples.

G E FANTHOM

Swindon

Explain rules over parking

I FEEL I must write after seeing another batch of cars opposite Russell's Hall Hospital having parking tickets put on their windows.

When visiting the hospital, locally or from outside the area, people are thinking more about times of appointments or visiting times and do not notice those little yellow lines on the kerbs which means no parking whatsoever – even with a disability badge.

Come out of the hospital, with goodness knows what on one's mind to discover a fine of £60 must be very upsetting.

I suggest the highways department put up a notice explaining the rules of the parking, and stop using someone's lack of understanding to make money so easily.

DEREK WESTON
Barnett Close
Kingswinford

Dog DNA idea doesn't add up

IN response to J Adams of Rowley Regis, given that Dudley Council needs to save £57m over the next three years, I doubt very much they will be investing in 'Poo Prints' DNA technology.

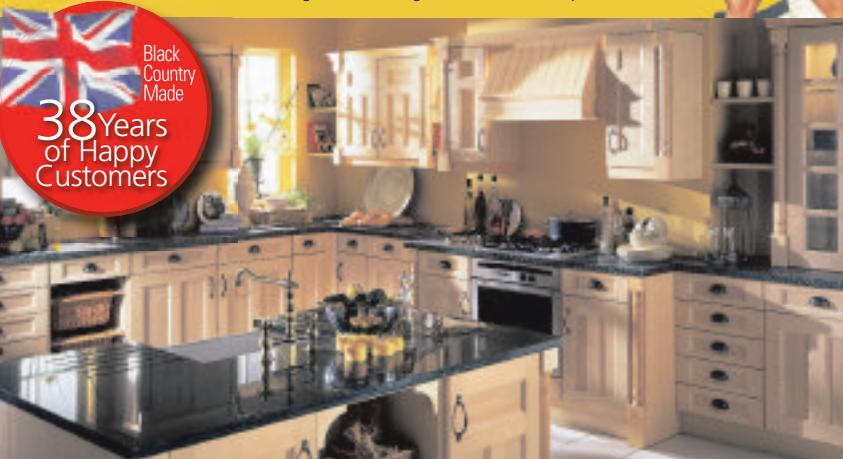
Firstly, owners will need to agree to have DNA taken from their pet at a cost to the council of approximately £25 each, then the matching service costs £40 approximately each.

As Dudley Council's fixed penalty notice for dog fouling is currently £50, the maths just don't add up!

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Out of this world space art display lands in city

AN exhibition offering a fascinating artistic insight into the world of space travel has landed in Wolverhampton.

In 2012, award-winning Portuguese photographer Edgar Martins approached the European Space Agency with an ambitious proposal.

He requested permission to produce the most comprehensive artistic survey on a leading scientific and space exploration organisation ever assembled. Unlike NASA or CERN, the ESA did not have an artist residency, but it had been looking to establish a more coherent dialogue with the wider public and the arts.

The exhibition, 'The Poetic Impossibility to Manage the Infinite' is the result of the ESA granting the artist, who currently lives in the UK, exclusive access to all of their facilities, staff, programs, technology and partners for the first time ever.

Ultimate

It will now run at the Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Lichfield Street, until May 2. Neus Miro, curator at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, said: "This exhibition has gone on display across the world, so it is great to have it here now."

"This is something which has taken Edgar Martins a good few years to produce and you can clearly see how hard he has worked to get these unique shots."

"Being granted such access to the ESA is unprecedented and Martins was the perfect person to take on that opportunity. As an artist, he has always been interested in landscapes and nature's empty spaces, so looking at how outer space is discovered would be the ultimate job for him."

The exhibition consists of photo-



One of the exhibition pictures



Part of Space Agency display



Gallery chance to get a close-up on one of the exhibits

graphs collected by Martins on his travels to 15 different locations across the world, including the UK, Holland, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Russia, Kazakhstan and French Guiana.

His subjects range from test centres, robotics departments, jet propulsion laboratories, space simulators, launch sites, astronaut training centres and satellites.

The result is a mix of snapshots of the high-tech world where the exploration of space begins and more personal pieces, highlighting how much human work goes in.

In a summary of the project on his website, Martins said: "I feel fortunate that ESA has recognised, through my proposal, that artists should be entitled to access and engage with space."

Guild hopes to find two quiz teams

Kingswinford TWG

As usual, the guild met in Kingswinford Community Centre on the second Monday of the month, in this instance, February 9.

Members were handed envelopes in which to put their annual subscription.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read, accepted and signed. Joy Williams was welcomed as the latest new member.

The minutes of the Federation meeting were read and very briefly discussed and members were asked questions concerning the future of events, now that the Federation has shrunk somewhat.

Events in the pipeline were read out and names are being taken for the quiz team. In fact, the guild hopes it can muster up two teams.

Events to mark the 50th anniversary of the community centre was announced.

Thanks were expressed by Mary Stevens Hospice for the blankets delivered there.

The Wednesday Club is currently knitting more. Donations of odds and ends of double knitting yarn would be gratefully accepted.

The speaker was Dave Wilkins, aka 'Big Dave', who gave a very amusing but thought-provoking talk about his years in the police force. He was thanked by Chris Moy.

The raffle was won by Joy Williams and Doreen Comley. Brenda Greenaway was thanked for bringing flowers to brighten the room.

The next meeting will be on March 9, which will be the AGM.

Members show off their floral creations



Guild members show off the beautiful flower arrangements they created

Sedgley Morning TG

couraged to attend. The guild meets on the first Thursday of the month at 10am at All Saints Church Hall where visitors and new members are always welcome.

Tales of a life in showbusiness

Black Country Society Kingswinford Branch

cinemas and local theatres

where he saw popular music hall artists of the time.

Eventually he became an acrobat and joined with Marilyn whom he married.

They performed in clubs and theatres and travelled the world meeting many famous people.

On March 18, at the Church Centre, The Village, at 7.45pm, the speaker will be Siddig Hussein on 'The history of British movie studios'.

Talks are open to members and non-members with a charge to cover expenses of £1 and £1.50 respectively.

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Residents in the dark over road name history

LEGEND has it that Oliver Cromwell fired cannons at Dudley Castle from the surrounding streets lending Cromwell Drive its name.

Historians have subsequently disputed this, arguing the guns at the time were incapable of causing damage from such a distance. But it is true that Cromwell was locked in a battle in Cawney Hill in 1644, and used Kates Hill as his base against King Charles.

Resident Tony Cartwright, aged 68, said: "I have heard the stories that this is where Cromwell cannoned the castle. That is why there are roads around here named after him."

"I don't think a lot of people around here, especially the young ones, would know about it."

Bryan Morton, 70, said: "It is called that because Cromwell came up here. They went from here to the castle and they shot cannons from here."

Swords

"There are stories that there used to be an area near here where the soldiers would dance and drag their swords. I was born and bred here so I've heard all the stories over the years."

The 18th century Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire was the birthplace of Winston Churchill, and has become a popular tourist destination.

So is this where the name of Blenheim Road in Kingswinford came from?

Blenheim Palace was built as a reward to John Churchill, The First Duke of Marlborough, for his military triumphs against the French and Bavarians during the War of the Spanish Succession, culminating in the 1704 Battle of Blenheim. But residents were at a loss over its significance.

Dental nurse Danielle Rainsford, 23,



Tony Cartwright and granddaughter Megan Cartwright in Cromwell Drive

said: "I've not long moved here and I hadn't noticed the link to the war. I don't know anything about it."

And Leanne Lees, 35, who has lived there for 10 years, added: "I never realised there was a link. I'd never thought about it. I don't know anything about the Battle of Blenheim."

John Edwards, 66, a retired engineer, has lived there 43 years but said he did not believe any of the road names had any significance.

Alan Smith, 65, said: "I've lived here for 30 years and I don't know. I know about Blenheim Palace but not the battle. I'm going to look it up now."

© This column is written by the Express & Star's local history editor, Steve Cheshire.



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NEWS IN BRIEF**Vaccination offer against shingles**

PEOPLE aged 70 to 80 are being offered a vaccination against shingles. GPs are offering the vaccine for free at surgeries across Dudley borough.

Unlike the flu jab, the shingles vaccine is only needed once. Shingles is a painful rash caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox, and is most common in older people.

Councillor Rachel Harris, Dudley Council's cabinet member for health, said: "The vaccine reduces the risk of getting the illness, but for those who do get it, their symptoms may be milder and the illness shorter than if they weren't protected."

Speak to your GP or practice nurse or visit the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk/shingles

Tickets on sale for variety show

TICKETS are still available for a variety show featuring music and drama performances.

The evening, starring people with learning disabilities, is being held in aid of Guide Dogs and Action Heart, the nominated charities of the Mayor of Dudley's Councillor Margaret Aston.

It takes place on February 24, from 7-9.30pm.

Highlights will include dance, music and poetry renditions as well as pieces by local theatre groups.

Tickets are £5, with free entry for young people with learning disabilities.

Call 01384 812812, visit Dudley Council Plus, Castle Street, Dudley, or buy online at www.dudley.gov.uk/entertainment

New factory for modular homes will create jobs

Company is gearing up for expansion

A HALESOWEN-based engineering firm is firing up its future growth plans.

Vacuum Furnace Engineering has secured the help of a substantial funding package from banking group Santander and private investment firm SEA Equity.

Prominent West Midlands businessman Roy Kishor has taken on the role of chairman and will lead the management team in growing the £10 million turnover firm in the longer term. It is looking for a big opportunity to expand its contract servicing and repair business, develop the next generation of vacuum furnaces and set up a new apprenticeship scheme in addition to its current business.

Kick-start

Mr Kishor said: "The investments we have received from Santander and SEA Equity enable us to kick-start our next phase of growth and expansion."

The Santander Corporate & Commercial Banking, Cornwall Street, Birmingham, team provided a growth capital loan, senior debt and revolving credit facility.

Established in 1985, VFE, of Hayes Industrial Estate, Hingley Road, is one of the UK's leading specialists in the design, supply and repair of vacuum furnaces.

The company supplies vacuum furnaces to a blue chip international client base, including Rolls Royce, Siemens and Boeing.

A HOUSEBUILDER is to open a factory making 'modular' homes in the heart of the Black Country.

The Mar Modular factory in Coseley will build for Mar City which has developments in the West Midlands, London and the South East. It is already recruiting for at least 20 staff while Mar Modular

By John Corser

partner will allow the group to build up to 1,000 modular homes a year. The factory will enable it to augment this production capacity.

Tony Ryan, chief executive of Mar City, said: "We now have a strong pipeline where we are in discussions with a number of potential joint venture partners and we are also developing plans to increase our home building capacity through the development of our own production facilities."

The company is currently building homes in Cranford Street, Smethwick and Alexandra Road, Tipton as well as in Walsall and Lichfield.

It is planning more than 700 homes on the Eco Park site at Bean Road, Coseley and has proposals for 248 at Hall Green Road, West Bromwich, 211 at Darkhouse Lane, Coseley and 38 at Mill Street, Great Bridge.

The Bean Road, development is on a shortlist of the 29 areas to become one of England's first 10 housing zones outside London.

Mar City's current production capability with its exclusive manufacturing

Punters raise a glass to asset status



Campaigners raise a glass to the Asset of Community Status at the Haden Cross pub at Cradley Heath

CAMPAIGNERS who have secured greater protection for a Black Country pub have urged others who feel their local may be at risk to follow their example.

The Haden Cross in Cradley Heath is to be listed as an Asset of Community Value after pressure from a friends group set up by nearby residents.

The pub was bought by Jersey-based property developers New River Retail for £90 million last year. But plans for a Co-operative store on its car park

off Halesowen Road were rejected by councillors. The ACV gives Friends of Haden Cross the chance to bid for the pub should it be up for sale.

Chairman Tim Haskey said: "It is the first pub in Sandwell to be granted the status and it is testament to the group.

"It is concrete recognition that the community want to keep this as a pub. It gives us a little bit of power."

And he added: "We would advise other groups who want to protect the longevity of a pub to do the same."

Treasurer Jim Mumford added a note of caution that the battle was not over.

"We are well aware that a threat remains - but we are ready for any further attempts to damage the viability of our pub," he said.

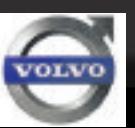
Vice chairman Huwye Lucas paid tribute to the support that the group had received.

Secretary Mike Shackleton added: "We would urge other communities in our situation to stand up for pubs they care for."

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£20m move for Dudley to rejoin rail network



Dudley transport boss Councillor Kurshid Ahmed at the location which is on track for a rail innovation centre FOR more than 20 years this stretch of derelict railway track has lay dormant.

Under ambitious plans backed by Dudley Council, this section of track could be transformed for use by light rail trains. The trains would reconnect Dudley to the national rail network, linking the old town centre train station at Castle Hill with Dudley Port station.

Councillor Kurshid Ahmed, cabinet member for transport, said: "We have a long history of innovative industry in Dudley and this demonstrates our

commitment to build on this in the future. This fantastic project will help link people in Dudley with the rest of the country while bringing people into the town for the landmark tourists sites we have here."

The £20 million project is part of a partnership between the council and Warwick Manufacturing Group, which is keen to use Dudley's disused rail lines to test new light rail technology.

The technology is a development of what is currently used on the Stourbridge Shuttle, which is known as the Parry People Mover and uses flywheel energy storage. It could create around

45 jobs at the outset with the potential to create hundreds more in the future.

Bids will be made to the Government's Regional Growth Fund and Europe to fund the creation of an innovation centre at the old Dudley train station site on council land at the bottom of Castle Hill.

One line will be used for testing new vehicles, while the other will be for passengers. The line used to be on the Oxford to Wolverhampton route, but Dudley station was closed to passengers 50 years ago and the line to Dudley Port was then used as a freight line until the 1980s.

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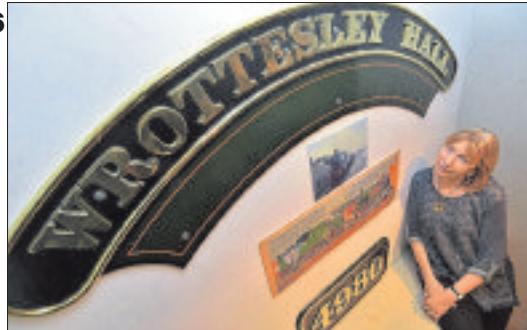
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Curator/manager Helen Steatham and a name plaque from a train



Looking back at entrance to Wolverhampton's old High Level station



Locomotive built by LNWR pictured at Bushbury Sheds



Volunteer Reece Jones, 22, with a model made in 1891 to illustrate a point during a court case on emissions

Display backtracks on railways' colourful past

BITTER disputes, a fatal accident and the unstoppable growth of industry – Wolverhampton's railways have a colourful past.

And now the untold stories of the city's network are being revealed in a new exhibition.

The event at Bantock House Museum looks at the origin of railways in Wolverhampton and the important role they have played in the city's development.

A range of artefacts, documents and information are displayed in the exhibition, with recordings of steam trains providing the soundtrack. The exhibits were loaned to the museum by railway historians Simon Dewey, Mervyn Srodnzinsky and Ned Williams.

Steam trains were built in Wolverhampton at the Stafford Road Locomotive Works near Dunstall, which opened in 1849 and where the new 2-2-2 express single locomotives were created in 1859. In 1864 a new super-

MEMORY LANE

By Jamie Brassington

intendent joined the works and developed a new way of working by which new parts were added to old locomotives – which became known as the 'Wolverhampton style.'

This is just one of the fascinating stories told through the exhibition, which also charts the history of bitter disputes on the lines over years.

Importance

The importance of the line led to the so-called 'railway battles' – two disputes between the Shrewsbury & Birmingham Railway (SBR) and the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) over agreements to use the Stour Valley line through to the high level station in Wolverhampton.

The first battle took place in 1850 when workmen from the rival companies confronted each other and the mayor, policeman and the military

armed with bayonets had to intervene. The second battle followed a year later which took place just south of Wolverhampton's current station.

An SBR train arrived in Wolverhampton around 9am and departed shortly after. It didn't get far though as the LNWR had blocked the line with two locomotives. The firm had also derailed another locomotive and removed parts of track.

Both sets of workmen confronted each other and the SBR train tried to push the LNWR train down the line but to no avail. The mayor, police and military again had to intervene.

Other historic events covered included a crash at the Portobello junction in 1899 in which two railway workers died.

Artifacts on show include a model steam engine – built in 1891 to defend a court case relating to emissions of sparks, and a plaque from a train named after Wrottesley Hall in Wolverhampton.

The exhibition, called One The Right Tracks, ends on May 10.



A locomotive headlamp forms part of the On the Right Tracks exhibition at the Bantock House Museum

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Models Shown: Jazz 1.4i-VTEC ES Plus Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic, Civic 1.4i-VTEC S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic, Civic Tourer 1.8i-VTEC S Manual in Milano Red Non-Metallic, CR-V 2.0i-VTEC S Manual, £999 Advanced Payment offer on CR-V 2.0i-VTEC S Manual 2WD. All offers are correct at the time of going to print however Honda (UK) reserves the right to change this offer at any time. Models subject to availability. Written details available on request. The facilities offered are for the hire of goods. The scheme is available to recipients of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance or War Pensioners Mobility Supplement. To qualify for this offer you must be in receipt of a minimum of 12 months allowance. Valid for applications between 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015 to Motability Operations Limited (Registered Company No. 1373876), City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB. Promoter is Honda Motor Europe Limited trading as Honda (UK) at Cain Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1HL.



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Boss in undisclosed deal to buy out US upholstery firm

AN office furniture manufacturer from Dudley has snapped up a US upholstery firm in a takeover deal thought to be worth several million pounds.

The move will give Boss Design the ability to make and distribute its furniture in America, where the market is six times bigger than in the UK.

It has acquired the 50-year-old Jack Cartwright firm, which has an 80,000 sq ft manufacturing facility in North Carolina. The price of the deal is not being revealed.

It follows the recent opening of the Boss Design showroom in Dubai where the company is winning work in the expanding Middle Eastern office market.

Boss Design founder and chairman Brian Murray said: "Having already successfully traded with the

USA for several years, the acquisition of the Jack Cartwright brand now presents us with the perfect opportunity to fully take advantage of established routes to market in the USA and to launch the Boss Design product portfolio to a lucrative sector which is currently six times bigger than that in the UK."

Boss has factories in Dudley and on the Pensnett estate in Kingswinford. The company, founded in 1983, employs more than 200 people and has annual turnover in excess of £30 million.

The Jack Cartwright business provides bespoke upholstery for commercial interiors across the USA. As well as continuing to manufacture this successful brand, the acquisition will now enable Boss Design to manufacture and distribute its own brands to the US market.



An upholsterer covers a seat at Boss Design Ltd in Boss Drive, Dudley

View from the air as 175 homes take shape

THIS birds-eye view shows how a huge development of 175 homes is rising from the ground in Hagley.

The first showrooms have been built but passers-by can already see the foundations in place for the next properties set for completion at the 30-acre site. The homes have been designed around a 'village green' concept to fit in with the surrounding area.



Wychbury Fields

in design and sensitive to its village location."

As part of the project, Cala Homes will contribute £800,000 towards education in the area and £85,000 towards improvements at Hagley Surgery, while £1m was spent on the Kidderminster Road roundabout.

A 4,000 signature petition opposed the plans when they were first mooted in 2013.

Outline permission was granted by Bromsgrove District Council, despite objections from Hagley parish council, before the detailed proposals were approved in September 2013.

Parish council chairman Steve Colella was among the objectors. He has since vowed to work with the developer to ensure the village benefits from the scheme.

Traditional

Around 170 people attended an open event to view the showrooms last weekend. Bosses said the development of two, three, four and five-bedroom homes had been designed to be in keeping with existing traditional architecture in Hagley.

Robert Monkman, sales and marketing director for Cala Homes Midlands, described it as a flagship development for the firm.

He said: "We have designed a high quality scheme, which is traditional

Students make voices heard in competition

EIGHT teams of students displayed their public speaking skills in the Youth Speaks contest.

The Rotary Club of Stourbridge sponsored the heat at King Edward VI College.

Participants came from Haybridge High School, King Edward VI Sixth Form College, Old Swindon Hospital School, Pedmore Technology College and Redhill School and were swelled by members of Stourbridge Rotary Club. They picked their own themes for the speeches made in front of students, parents and teachers.

Rotarians joined members of Stourbridge Speakers Club to help judge the contest.

Winners go through to the district round. They were: in the Intermediate category, aged 11-13, Aimee Erb, Skye Warwicker and Georgia Phillips from Redhill School and in the senior section, aged 14-17, George Glasby, Manraj Sanghera and Ben Phillips.

Hours reviewed as visitor numbers fall

OPENING hours at a museum dedicated to Willenhall's lock making heritage are to be reviewed following a dip in visitor numbers.

The number of people touring the Grade II listed Locksmith's House fell overall last year, despite sell-out crowds for one-off events held there.

Around 700 visitors called into the centre, in New Road last year.

Operated by Dudley's Black Country Living Museum, the lock museum is open for bookings only and pulled in about 800 visitors in 2013.

Bosses are now considering whether to hold extra events at holiday times to attract more families to the venue.

Abby Bird, of the Black Country Living Museum, said: "The Locksmith's House is a wonderful and unique place.

"We may change opening days a little this year to focus opening times when people are most likely to be on holiday. We will always open this much-loved museum as often as we can manage."

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Award for buildings launched by society

THE Victorian Society has launched a new conservation award for the best work carried out to Victorian and Edwardian buildings in the West Midlands.

It is hoped the award will help draw attention to the high quality conservation work done by architects and other groups across the region.

Nominations can be submitted via the society's website until December with the winner announced in February 2016 at the group's AGM.

Entries will be judged on the care taken to retain the building's original fabric, conservation of fragile aspects and careful adaption to meet current needs for re-use of the building.

Stephen Hartland, chairman of the Victorian Society's Birmingham and West Midlands Group, said: "We want to counter the impression that the Society is only involved when things go wrong and buildings are threatened.

"We know that a huge amount of high quality con-

servation work goes on in Birmingham and the West Midlands. Hopefully, this new conservation award will help draw attention to this good work and the region's architectural gems."

A shortlist of the nominations will be released in January 2016.

The winner will receive a 15 inch bronze disc recording their name and the year for display and a certificate.

Prolific burglars are snared by DNA

TWO career criminals responsible for a string of house burglaries have been jailed after DNA evidence proved their guilt.

Paul Gallagher, aged 39, of Hayes Croft, Birmingham and Dennis Steenson, of no fixed abode, were responsible for the break-ins across the West Midlands.

But Gallagher left a glove near

the scene of a house he broke into in Christopher Road, Halesowen, in August 2014 which helped to identify him.

He was jailed for three-and-a-half years, while Steenson, 38, received 33 months after they were found guilty at Stafford Crown Court.

The pair, who denied the charges,

had more than 100 previous convictions between them. Steenson had broken into a property at Rednal Road, West Heath, in June last year, while Gallagher was found guilty of a further burglary at Fillongley Road, Meriden.

The pair were also convicted of handling stolen goods after a Peugeot and Ford Focus were stolen in Kings Norton and Northfield.

Birthday milestone as Joyce turns 100

MORE than 100 friends and family gathered to celebrate a Dudley resident's 100th birthday.

Joyce Brookes, who was born just a year after the outbreak of the First World War and has lived in the borough all her life, was also joined by the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Margaret Aston, and Dudley North MP Ian Austin to celebrate the milestone.

Son Harry, aged 75, a former council officer, said: "It was a fantastic turnout. My mother was so pleased and actually got quite emotional when she walked in the door. It was a complete surprise.

"We wanted to do something special because it is a real milestone. She is still very well and despite a bit of arthritis she is very sharp."

Councillor Aston and Mr Austin both brought bouquets of flowers.

Born Joyce Forrest on February 7, 1915, she became a seamstress. She married Harry at St Thomas' Church in 1937. They had two children, Harry and his sister June, now 77.

She also has two grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

Around 110 family and friends attended the party at the 44 Club on Spring Road, Wolverhampton, where there was a compere and entertainment.

Mrs Brookes also received a postcard from The Queen.

Crackdown near school targets speeding drivers



Eva Massey, aged seven, of Dingle Primary, with PCSO Jim Keeley and Councillor Derrick Hemingsley

PUPILS and police joined forces to help clamp down on drivers speeding along busy main road near a school.

Children at Dingle Community Primary, Madeley Road, Kingswinford, were shown how to use a speed gun before monitoring traffic along Rangewoods Road.

Around 20 Year Three pupils, accompanied by school staff, police and councillors, spent 45 minutes checking motorists' speed.

The youngsters all got the chance to use the speed gun

and the experience will now form part of a project on speed they are working on. No motorists were caught flouting the 30mph limit during the 45 minutes. But a monitoring session held earlier in the day along Lawnswood Wood, in Wordsley, clocked 10 motorists exceeding the limit – with the fastest recorded at 43mph.

Pupils from Belle Vue School took part in the exercise.

Vehicle registration numbers were noted down and the owners will be sent a warning letter.

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Family firm for more than 30 years

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

FAMILY company Dreamworld was formed back in 1982, with the original shop in Windmill Bank, Wombourne in what was previously the village's Launderette.

Owner Roger Manley was then working as a merchant Banker based in Birmingham and after the couple's children started school he and his wife Ailie thought they should start a business.

"We weren't absolutely sure what type of business to open to start with," admits Roger.

"But we knew that Wombourne was a thriving village which was expanding rapidly and after studying the businesses that already existed we felt that there was a gap in the market for a furniture and bedding outlet."

Strength

It turned out to be a good decision and during the next five years the business went from strength to strength with more family members joining the expanding team including Roger's brother John, sister Mavis and his two sisters in law.

In 1987, due to increasing demand, whilst retaining the original Wombourne shop the family opened a second outlet in Stallings Lane Kingswinford with approximately ten times the floor space.

Everything seemed to be progressing well with a further five years successful trading until tragedy struck when a fire completely gutted the Kingswinford store.

"The fire started on a Sunday morning whilst John and I were in the shop" explains Roger.

"It was a major setback and we were very low at the time but with the help of our suppliers, friends and family it turned into a true phoenix from the ashes story."

"Remarkably within just one week we were trading again moving into what was then vacant premises further down Stallings Lane where we have traded successfully for 24 years building an enviable reputation for value for money, quality and service."



Around 70 per cent of business comes via recommendation or previous customers

It is the companies proud boast that approximately 70 per cent of their business comes via recommendation or previous customers.

"This is obviously the best type of business you can get and is an endorsement of the level of service and satisfaction that customers have enjoyed from us," says Roger.

Generations

"We often get generations of families come to us whose parents and grandparents have bought items from us and we are now dealing with the latest generation, it's very satisfying."

A lot of the furniture Dreamworld sell is bespoke with settees made in any choice of size and style finished in fabric or leather.

The vast majority of the chairs can be ordered as recliners including "rise and recliners".

"This is becoming an increasingly high proportion of our business for those customers who have difficulty getting

up and down into their chairs," adds Roger. "Beds can also be custom made to any size and be electrically operated to assist with getting in and out of bed which is a real problem for a lot of people."

"For our customers peace of mind all our suites and beds carry a ten year guarantee,

unless otherwise stated, and it has been our policy from day one to offer free delivery and removal of your old furniture.

"As the old saying goes," says Roger, "you can fool some of the people all of the time, all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time and any company that operates on that basis without looking after customers is not going to last and certainly won't enjoy the longevity that Dreamworld has."

Proud

"We are very proud of our record for customer satisfaction which has always been at the top of our agenda."



Dreamworld Furniture is situated at 8 Stallings Lane, Kingswinford

BUSINESS PROFILE

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'Phenomenal' demand at Landmark apartments

WORK is on track on a multi-million pound project to transform a former office block into apartments.

More than two-thirds of the 181 luxury apartments at The Landmark – formerly Point North offices – at the Waterfront have been snapped up.

One of the penthouse suites has been bought by Wolverhampton Wanderers legend Steve Bull.

Most of the work inside the building has been completed. Electrical and sewage supplies have been connected to each apartment and now work will begin on partitioning each home.

Work began on the apartments in July last year. The work is being carried out by developers Seven Capital and contractors Colmore Tang.

Phase

Sales director Andy Foote said phase one of the apartment sales was completed with phase two due to complete at the end of the month.

Phase three will begin in March with the last third of apartments being sold off with a 10 per cent price increase.

Mr Foote said: "Work is going very well and we are well on track to complete by November, which has always been our target completion date."

"The major part of the works was the engineering work, such as sewage and electrics, but that has all been finished and now we will focus on finishing the apartments."

Mr Foote said there has been around 2,000 enquiries, many regarding rental opportunities.

"We have had many rental enquiries but currently we are only selling apartments to buy," he said. "Apartments will be available to rent from November. It will be a very popular spot in Dudley."



Canalside residential development The Landmark at Brierley Hill's Waterfront



Former offices are being transformed into apartments inside The Landmark

"The price will increase by 10 per cent in the third phase and we expect all the apartments to be gone by May, so anyone thinking of buying, now is definitely the time to do it."

The total resale value of the properties will be around £18 million with prices starting at £79,000 for a one-bedroom apartment.

A third of the apartments were bought up before the first phase had even completed, which Seven Capital's managing director Phil Carlin described as 'phenomenal'.

The seven-storey former office block will consist of 136 one-bed flats, 37 two-bed and eight studios including six rooftop penthouse apartments.

The building was empty for five years after insurance firm Egg left.

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Set in glorious grounds beside the River Thames Hampton Court Palace boasts over 60 acres of beautiful gardens to explore, including the Great Vine and the Privy garden, which has been restored to its 1702 glory.

A visit is also made to Royal Windsor where there is some free time to explore the wealth of unusual shops or step inside the castle (payable locally).

An optional excursion is offered to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, or as an alternative, free time in central London to shop or sightsee.

INFO

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Entrance to RHS Chelsea Flower Show, RHS Garden Wisley and Hampton Court Palace Gardens
- Free time in Windsor and London
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Suffolk Skies, Coast and Country

Three days departing July 3

PRICE FROM £159

- Return coach travel
- Two nights half-board accommodation
- Visits to Lavenham, Aldeburgh and Southwold
- Entrance to Jimmy's Farm
- Entrance to Bridge Cottage to see the John Constable Exhibition
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Portsmouth from Sea to Sky

Three days departing April 25

PRICE FROM £209

- Return coach travel
- Two nights half-board accommodation
- Full day at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard
- Portsmouth harbour cruise
- Ride to the top of the Spinnaker Tower
- Entrance to the Submarine Museum
- Visit to Winchester
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Florence and Tuscany

Eight days various departure dates

PRICE FROM £879

- Return flights
- Seven nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Four dinners
- Guided tours of Florence and Siena
- Visits to Pisa and San Gimignano
- Timed visit to the Uffizi Gallery (entrance payable locally)
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

The Rhine Valley and Strasbourg by Eurostar

Seven days various departure dates

PRICE FROM £629

- Return standard class seat on Eurostar and TGV from London
- Return rail connections to London
- Six nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Two dinners
- Tour of the Rhine Valley
- Guided tours of Strasbourg and Heidelberg
- Visits to Aachen, Colmar and the Black Forest
- Tour of Alsace's scenic wine road
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Ladies Day at Royal Ascot

Two days departing June 17

PRICE FROM £149

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Entrance to the Silver Ring at Royal Ascot (upgrade to Grandstand Admission offered for £42 per person)
- Visit to Windsor
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Elvis Exhibition at the O2 London

Two days departing April 18, May 9, June 6, August 22

PRICE FROM £115

- Return coach travel
- Overnight half-board accommodation
- Ticket to the Elvis Exhibition at the O2 Arena, London
- Visit to Greenwich
- Free time in central London
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Welsh Association of Male Voice Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall

Two days departing May 9

PRICE FROM £129

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Circle seat for the concert (upgrades offered)
- Sightseeing tour or free time in London
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

Strawberry Fields, Penny Lane and the Cavern Club

Three days departing May 29 and Sep 19

PRICE FROM £189

- Return coach travel
- Two nights half-board accommodation
- Beatles Coach Tour* and entrance to the Cavern Club
- Journey on the "Ferry 'cross the Mersey"
- Afternoon in Liverpool
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Holidays (ABTA V787X)

The Dawlish Railway and the Avocet Line

Four days departing March 27

PRICE FROM £229

- Return coach travel
- Three nights half-board accommodation
- Railway journey on the Riviera Line from Exeter to Paignton
- Cruise on the River Exe with cream tea
- Railway journey on the Avocet Line from Topsham to Exmouth
- Free time in Exmouth and Torquay
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

Call the Midwife

Two days departing May 16, Jul 25, Oct 3

PRICE FROM £125

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Visit with entrance to London's Historic Dockyard in Chatham, including a 90-minute Call the Midwife guided walking tour
- Visit to Canterbury
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Holidays (ABTA V787X)

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Four days various departure dates November 2015 to March 2016

PRICE FROM £529

Iceland Reykjavík and the Northern Lights

Four days various departure dates November 2015 to March 2016

PRICE FROM £529

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- Search for the Northern Lights tour*
- Optional excursions offered
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- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

*Please note the Northern Lights are a natural phenomenon and sightings cannot be guaranteed
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**Rick wit and the
prog rock veterans**

PROG rock veterans are back in the Black Country next week with the return of some of the biggest names from the 70s progressive rock genre.

Former Yes keyboardist, raconteur Rick Wakeman presents Yet Another Evening With at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on February 26. It blends tales from his rock career and examples of his virtuosic skills. Support is from harmonious folk-singing siblings The Cadbury Sisters.

On the same night Colosseum return 45 years since they originally split, to play the Robin 2 in Bilston. The line up includes founder John Hiseman, his wife Barbara Thompson on sax (she has been battling Parkinson's Disease) and singer Chris Farlowe.

Psychocandy is back on the menu

INFLUENTIAL rock band The Jesus and Mary Chain, based around Scottish brothers Jim and William Reid, will go back to their pioneering Psychocandy 1985 debut for a gig at Birmingham Institute on Wednesday, February 25.

Meanwhile, rock veterans Paul Jones and Dave Kelly bring The Blues Band to Bilston's Robin 2 tonight (Thursday). Charlie Simpson's reunited Fightstar are at the Institute on Monday with Pond at the Digbeth venue the following night. Brum's Ocean Colour Scene have two nights at Symphony Hall celebrating 25 years on Saturday and Tuesday.

By royal appointment — the king and his speech therapist

Walking, dancing, living doll

BIRMINGHAM Royal Ballet return home to Birmingham Hippodrome to begin a special year that marks their 25th anniversary in the city and director-choreographer David Bintley's 20th year at the company.

Family favourite Coppélia, about an eccentric toymaker who wants to bring a life-sized doll to life and is tricked, is staged from Tuesday to Saturday, February 28. First performed by the company in 1995, Sir Peter Wright's production is one of BRB's most popular classical ballets. Each performance will feature a different ballerina in the comic-romantic role of Swanhilda.

This week, until Saturday, the company present Moving Stateside, three short ballets including George Blanchine's elegant Serenade, Jessica Lang's innovative Lyric Pieces and Twyla Tharp's exhilarating In the Upper Room.



Elisha Willis as Coppélia/Swanilda and David Morse as toymaker Doctor Coppélus

THE King's Speech — the play from which the Oscar-winning movie was adapted — will star Raymond Coulthard as King George VI and Jason Donovan as his Australian speech therapist Lionel Logue at Birmingham Repertory Theatre next week.

The production is directed by the Rep's artistic director Roxana Silbert and is staged from Wednesday, February 25, to Saturday, March 7. The play tells of the stammering king's relationship with his unconventional therapist as his brother's abdication thrusts him into the public eye.

Aussie soap and pop star Jason Donovan has successfully created a stage career, whilst Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and National Theatre actor Raymond Coulthard is best known as Miles Egerton in ITV drama Mr Selfridge.

Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre continues its association with some of the nation's finest theatre companies. The National Theatre's touring production of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time continues until Saturday. Then the RSC and English Touring Theatre's production of A Mad World My Masters has a short run from February 26 to 28. A hit when it was staged at Stratford in 2013, Sean Foley's production updates Thomas Middleton's raucous 1600s comedy to seedy 1950s Soho



Jason Donovan and
Raymond Coulthard in
The King's Speech

where life is a matter of fact or be scammed.

EastEnders director Kate Saxon returns to the theatre with a touring revival of Alan Bennett's comedy-drama The History Boys, at Birmingham New Alex-

ander Theatre from Monday

to Saturday. The movie version of the play, about precocious Yorkshire grammar school students aiming to get to university in Oxford or Cambridge, launched the careers of James Corden and Dominic Cooper.

The line-up at Digbeth's Institute on Saturday, February 28, includes Glasgow rockers The Amazing Snakeheads, Brighton punk dance duo Slaves, the controversial Fat White Family and headliners London garage rockers Palma Violets.

Buzz around The Honey Man play

AN AGEING Caribbean recluse who keeps bees and a teenage heiress clash in The Honey Man by Tyrone Huggins, with the Birmingham playwright himself in the titular role, at The Rep's The Door venue until Saturday. The play is then at Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre on Tuesday (matinee and evening).

Meanwhile, 1940s American comedy Harvey continues at Birmingham Rep until Saturday with James Dreyfuss as the man with an invisible giant rabbit as and Maureen Lipman as his long-suffering sister.

Over at the New Alexandra Theatre, Jodie Prenger will continue to whipcrack-away as Calamity Jane until Saturday in the wild west musical.

NME Awards tour rolls in for city gig

THE NME Awards Tour rolls into Birmingham this month with a chance to see four bands who won over critics at the music journal.

This year the tour, which is being backed by the trendy Texan city of Austin, marks 25 years of discovering major talent, such as Coldplay, The Killers, Arctic Monkeys and, last year, Royal Blood.

The line-up at Digbeth's Institute on Saturday, February 28, includes Glasgow rockers The Amazing Snakeheads, Brighton punk dance duo Slaves, the controversial Fat White Family and headliners London garage rockers Palma Violets.

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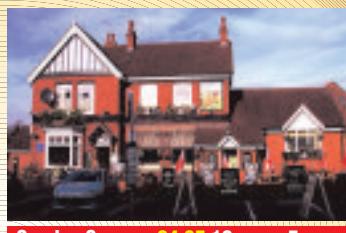
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by Graham Lineham

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SATURDAY'S TV FEBRUARY 21

CHOICE



Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
(ITV, 7pm)

The popular Geordie duo return with a new series of the entertainment show, featuring pranks, sketches, famous guests and competitions. Singer Olly Murs becomes the latest victim of the pair's undercover pranks as they infiltrate the pop star's final session for his very own wax figure at Madame Tussauds Blackpool. Singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran performs live in the studio, and former Pussycat Doll Ashley Roberts leaves the hosts in a spin as she presides over the first round of Ant v Dec. Plus, one lucky member of the studio audience plays for the contents of a commercial break.

BBC1

- 6.00 Breakfast.** **10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live.** **11.30** Mary Berry Cooks. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.50 Saturday Sportday.** **1.00** Live Athletics: Birmingham Indoor Grand Prix. Coverage from the Barclaycard Arena in Birmingham. **4.30 Final Score.** **5.20 Pointless Celebrities.** With famous faces from the world of children's TV. (R) **6.10 BBC News;** Regional News; Weather.
- 6.30 Now You See It.** Magic highlights, featuring baffled traffic wardens, a card trick performed during a skydiver and an eye-popping illusion with a Rubik's Cube. Narrated by Matt Gledroyd. **7.00 The Voice UK.** It's the final round of blind auditions and it's bound to be a tense time for all as the coaches will let the last few places on their teams. Will.i.am, Tom Jones, Rita Ora and Ricky Wilson will only want the best singers to take through to next week's battle rounds, when their acts will be pitted against each other in head-to-head knockout performances. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes meet the hopefuls, who include burlesque dancer Amber Topaz and Tina Turner impersonator Andrew Marc. **8.25 The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List.** Shane Richie hosts the game show in which contestants answer questions to win each other's dream prizes. Including the lottery draws, with guest Marco Pierre White.
- 9.15 Casualty.** A woman is admitted with stomach cramps – but when Dylan and Lofty dig out her notes, she is forced to confess a big secret. Connie helps a teenager with Tourette's syndrome. **10.05 BBC News;** Weather. **10.25 Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Chelsea v Burnley at Stamford Bridge and Manchester City v Newcastle United at the Etihad Stadium; National Lottery Update. **11.50 The Football League Show.** Manish Bhasin presents highlights and all the goals from the latest fixtures in the Championship, League One and League Two, including Brentford v Bournemouth. **11.10 EastEnders.** (R) **4.05 Weather** for the Week Ahead. **4.10 BBC News.**

BBC2

- 7.25 Film:** Summer Magic. (1963) **9.10** Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam. (R) **9.40** The Fred Dibnah Story. (R) **10.10** British Isles: A Natural History. (R) **11.00** Six Nations Rewind. **12.00 Food & Drink.** (H) **12.30** A Taste of Britain. **1.00** A Taste of Britain. **1.30 On the Waterfront.** Talking Pictures. **2.00 Film:** The Waterfront. (1954) Drama, with Marlon Brando. **3.45 The Go-Between.** (1971) Period drama, with Julie Christie. (R) **3.55 The Great British Sewing Bee.** (R) **3.55 Flug II!** Experts David Barby and Emily Tait travel to the UK's seaside town of Skegness in Lincolnshire, where they value items brought in by locals. **7.30 How We Got to Now with Steven Johnson.** The American author explores the technological innovations in the measurement of time, examining the stories of the unsung heroes whose ideas transformed the world. He looks at the developments made by a railway clerk who fought to standardise time zones and the cobbler who invented the first cheap watch. **8.30 Dad's Army.** Private Pike receives his call-up papers and unexpectedly passes his medical, much to the horror of his mollycoddling mother. (R) **9.00 Reginald D Hunter's Songs of the South.** New series. The Georgia-born, London-based comedian goes on a road trip to explore the American South through its songs both past and present, beginning with the music of Kentucky and Tennessee. He examines the disturbing tradition of blackface minstrels, and visits Dollywood theme park, a slave plantation, the home of country music in Nashville, a moonshine distillery in Gatlinburg and a string-band festival in Mount Air. Featuring contributions by Dolly Parton, the Hemsdale Family and Del McCoury. **10.00 Film: Gambit.** (2012) Premiere. A group of start-ups plan to revalue on a millionaire by tricking him into buying a fake Monet painting. Comedy remake, with Colin Firth, Cameron Diaz and Alan Rickman. **11.20 Film: Spider.** (2002) A schizophrenic pieces together the traumatic childhood events that led to his condition. Psychological thriller, starring Ralph Fiennes and Miranda Richardson. **12.55 Jackpot.** (2017) **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40 ITV** Nightscreen.

ITV

- 6.00 CITV:** Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25 Signed Stories:** Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrambled: Nerds & Monks. (R) **7.30** Scrambled: Adventure Time. (R) **8.30** Scrambled: Horrid Harry. (R) **8.50** Scrambled: Hulk and the Agents of S.M.A.S.H. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.35** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.35** The Unforgettable Hattie Jacques. (R) **2.05** The Chase. (R) **3.05** Doc Martin. (R) **4.05** Big Star's Little Star. (R) **5.05** Regional Programme: Weather. **5.15** ITV News; Weather. **5.25** You've Been Framed! Presents: Harry Hill's absurd thoughts on a variety of subjects. (R) **6.30 Planet's Got Talent.** A man covers himself in giant crabs, a preschool Popeye flexes his muscles, a pig shows off its football skills and a hopeful plays the harmonica with his nose. Last in the series. **7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway.** New series. The duo play an undercover prank on Olly Murs at Madame Tussauds Blackpool, and bust it out in the first round of Ant v Dec. Ed Sheeran performs live in the studio. **8.25 Take Me Out.** Builder Rich, blacksmith Andy, business manager Ashley and estate agent Ross vie for the attentions of 30 single women, intent on securing a date. Paddy McGuinness hosts. **9.40 The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host is joined by Absolutely Fabulous star Jennifer Saunders, who recently finished writing the script for the big-screen version of the hit sitcom, and Take Me Out presenter Paddy McGuinness, who is embarking on a 50-date tour later this year. Plus, actor Nick Frost, long-time comedy partner of Simon Pegg. **10.40 ITV News;** Weather. **10.55 Film:** I Now Pronounce You Clark & Larry. (2007) A fireman asks a man to lie down to pretend to marry him to get rid of a problem with his late wife's life insurance policy. Comedy, with Adam Sandler and Kevin James. **12.55 Jackpot.** (2017) **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40 ITV** Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

- 6.10 How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **6.35** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.00** Trans World Sport. **7.55** The Morning Line. **9.00** The King of Queens. (R) **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** Frasier. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.55** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.25** Dr Genius. (R) **1.30** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Kempton Park, Newcastle and Lingfield Park. **4.15** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.15** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **5.45** The Simpsons. (R) **6.10** The Simpsons. (R) **6.40** Channel 4 News. **7.00 Homes by the Sea.** New series. Charlie Luxton visits some of Britain's best seaside properties and designs his own fantasy home in each location, taking inspiration from the local area and scenery. He begins on the Pennines coastline, where he views a spa-age home built into the cliffs at St Brides Bay and advises a couple undertaking a huge renovation project overlooking Fishguard Harbour. He then heads to Newport, sailing up the River Nevern to explore the secrets of a remarkable waterside property, before visiting an ancient castle that doubles up as a cosy period cottage. **8.00 The World's Weirdest Weather.** A look at weather at its strangest and fastest, featuring a cloud enveloping a supersonic jet, apocalyptic black rain, towering waterspouts and a red waterfall. Last in the series. **9.00 Film:** Silver Linings Playbook. (2012) Premiere. A teacher is committed to a psychiatric institution after battering his wife's lover. Eight months later, he is released into the care of his parents and sets about rebuilding his ruined life, finding help in the shape of a woman with psychological issues of her own to resolve. Romantic comedy drama, starring an Oscar-nominated Jennifer Lawrence, with Bradley Cooper and Robert De Niro. **11.25 Film:** Green Zone. (2010) An unlikely offer searching trap for weapons of mass destruction after the US invasion uncovers a conspiracy. Thriller, starring Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear. **1.35 The Last Leg.** (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. (R) **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.25** Deal or No Deal. (R)

CHANNEL 5

- 6.00 Milkshake!** **10.00** SpongeBob SquarePants. **10.35** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **10.55** The Dog Rescuers. (R) **11.20** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **1.10** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **2.10** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **3.05 Film:** Columbus. How to Dial a Murder. (1978) Crime drama, starring Peter Falk. **4.35 Film:** Columbo: Murder – A Self Portrait. (1989) Detective drama, starring Peter Falk. **5.25 NCIS.** Ducky prepares a case while his team leave by taking officials into releasing the body of a navy commander whose post-mortem he carried out 12 years previously. (R) **7.05 NCIS.** The team is called in to investigate when three dehydrated survivors from a helicopter crash are discovered. The pilot is initially missing, but his body later washes ashore with a gunshot wound to the head. Things get complicated when one of the crew members tells the agents the chopper was hit by another aircraft, while another states that the pilot tried to kill them all by crashing into the sea on purpose. (R) **8.00 5 News.** **8.05 Law & Order.** Lupo and Green are called to the scene after a white teenage boy and a black girl are shot and killed, but locals are unwilling to talk about the incident. Previously unseen on 5USA. **9.00 CSI: Crime Scene Investigation.** Morgan, Sara and Julie take a break from normal duty by attending a forensics conference, but any thoughts of a peaceful getaway are shattered when a gunman bursts in and starts shooting into the crowd at a lecture before continuing on a rampage through the hotel. The team discovers the attacker had killed a hotel security guard just a few days before and was thought to be targeting specific individuals on his spree, including Dr Jane Snyder, a former colleague of Sara. **10.00 World Championship Boxing: Live From Monte Carlo.** Genndy Golovkin v Martin Murray. Live coverage of the bout for the WBA Super WBO Interim and IBO World Middleweight titles, from Salle des Etoiles in Monte Carlo, Monaco. **12.15 SuperCasino.** **3.10** **10.00** BC. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarni. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

- BBC Three** **7.00** Great Movie Mistakes 2: The Sequel (2000) **10.10** Live at the Apollo. **10.40** Family Guy **12.55** Crims **3.50** Close **BBC Four** **7.00** Natural World: Tiger Island **8.00** A Very British Murder with Lucy Worsley **9.00** Hostages **10.20** Charlie Brooker's Weekly Wipe **11.50** Queen of Heartache **11.50** Queens of Jazz: The Joy and Pain of the Jazz Divas **12.50** Top of the Pops: 1980 **1.30** Total Bonkers **2.00** Natural World: Tiger Island **3.00** A Very British Murder with Lucy Worsley **4.00** Close **ITV2** **11.15** Film: Babe: Pig in the City (1998) **1.10** Film: Richie Rich (1994) **3.00** Film: Mr Magorium's Wonder Emporium (2007) **4.55** You've Been Framed! **5.25** Film: Back to the Future (1985) **7.45** Film: Evan Almighty (2007) **9.00** Take Me Out – The Keith Lemon Sketch Show **11.35** Ibiza Weekender **12.35** Film: The Invention of Lying (2009) **2.25** Total Bonkers **Guinness World Records 2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen **ITV3** **11.45** A Touch of Frost **1.55** Wyldlife **3.05** Film: Carry on Again Doctor (1969) **4.55** Agatha Christie's **6.55** Doc Martin **8.00** Foyle's War **10.05** Lewis **12.10** A Touch of Frost **2.40** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping **ITV4** **11.00** The Big Fish Off **12.00** Film: For Whom the Bell Tolls (1943) **3.10** Film: Field of Dreams (1989) **5.20** Storage Wars **7.15** Storage Wars: Texas **8.10** Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) **10.00** Cricket World Cup Highlights **11.00** Film: Plunkett & MacLeane (1999) **1.05** River Monsters **2.00** Hogan's Heroes **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen **0.50** Teleshopping **E4** **11.00** Taking New York **12.00** Marry Me **12.30** New Girl **1.30** Melissa & Joey **2.30** Baby Daddy **3.30** How I Met Your Mother **4.30** Rules of Engagement **5.30** Troy **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: The Babewives Movie (2011) **11.00** The Inbetweeners **1.50** The Inbetweeners Movie **10.20** The Babewives Movie **1.50** Troy **2.30** How I Met Your Mother **3.20** Don't Trust the B**** in Apartment 23 **4.05** Suburbia **4.25** One Tree Hill **5.10** Desperate Housewives **Film4** **11.00** Town on Trial (1957) **1.00** Beaches (1989) **3.30** Marley and Me (2008) **5.00** Independence Day (1996) **9.00** Vehicle 19 (2013) **10.40** Pusher (2012) **12.25** The Cold Light of Day (2012) **2.15** Rize (2005) **4.00** Close

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BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. **11.30** MOTD2 Extra. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** The Link. **2.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **2.45** Eat Well for Less? (R) **3.45** Your Hands in Their Hands. **4.45** Lifeline. **4.55** Songs of Praise. **5.30** BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

6.00 The Big Painting Challenge.

Nine sets of Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon test their art competition, in which 10 keen amateurs take on three specially designed challenges each week, showing their skills across a range of mediums – from oil, acrylic and watercolour painting to pencil, charcoal and chalk drawing – and different themes, including landscapes, still life and portraiture. Their efforts are judged by painters Daphne Todd and Lachlan Goudie – and they are the ones who decide who will be leaving the contest at the end of each show.

7.00 Countryfile. The team explores how erosion has shaped Suffolk. Matt Baker joins scientists to view a town swallowed by the sea centuries ago and Tom Heap investigates the price of milk. Including Weather for the Week ahead.

8.00 Call the Midwife. A diabetic teenager faces heartbreak when she falls pregnant as a result of a clandestine romance. The midwives become involved with a set of Irish travellers.

9.00 The Casual Vacancy. As 'The Ghost of Barry Fairbrother' makes further accusations, Samantha throws a dinner party to smooth things over – but things get out of control when Howard and Shirley arrive.

10.00 BBC News; Regional News; Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Southampton v Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur v West Ham United and Everton v Leicester City.

11.40 The Super League Show: World Club Series Special. Action from the World Club Series, featuring the fixtures, including St Helens v South Sydney Rabbits in the World Club Challenge from Langtree Park.

12.25 The Apprentice USA. **1.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **6.55** Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.15** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **8.00** Countryfile. (R) **9.00** The Football League Show. (R) **10.20** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.50** The Great Come Relief Bake Off. (R) **12.50** Live Cycling. Coverage of the final day of the UCI Track World Championships. **4.30** The Wonder of Animals. (R) **5.00** Alaska – Earth's Frozen Kingdom. (R)

6.00 Speed Dreams: The Fastest Place on Earth.

Every year, thousands of enthusiasts from all over the world descend on a dried-up salt lake in Bonneville, Utah, hoping to join the elite group of the fastest people on earth. This two-part documentary follows British petroheads building machines that they hope will make a mark in America, beginning by meeting the obsessive men behind the machines, including a Great Yarmouth beach cleaner with a formidable reputation as a motorcycle builder. Bill Nighy narrates. (R)

7.00 The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway. Documentary following the work of more than 10,000 engineers and construction workers as they build Crossrail – a new train line linking east and west London. (R)

8.00 Top Gear. Richard Hammond compares the Porsche Cayman GTS with the latest Chevrolet Corvette and James May takes the LaFerrari hybrid hypercar out for a spin in Italy. With guest Olly Murs.

9.00 Dragons' Den. Ideas pitched include a new form of transportation, a subscription box of foodie treats, a safety device for boats and a home-made marmalade brand. Evan Davis presents.

10.00 Meet the UKippers. Documentary offering an insight into UKIP's campaign following its success in the first of six months in South Thanet, Kent, where Nigel Farage is standing at the General Election.

10.50 Film: Blown Away. (2011) Remaking Bud Spencer's plans to return home to his wife from exile in Bolivia, but is drawn into one last criminal adventure.

Western, starring Sam Shepard and Eduardo Noriega.

12.30 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **1.25** Holby City. (R) **2.25** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.30** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Cannibals. (R) **7.10** Sooty. (R) **7.25** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.30** Scrabaled!: Scrambled! (R) **7.35** Scrabaled!: Nerds & Monks. (R) **7.45** Scrabaled!: Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.30** Scrabaled!: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.50** Scrabaled!: Deadtime Stories. (R) **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.35** ITV News; Weather. **12.40** The Unforgettable Kenneth Williams. (R) **1.10** Mel & Sue's Best Bits. **2.15** The Chase. (R) **3.10** Tipping Point. (R) **4.15** Film: Octopussy. (1983) James Bond investigates the mysterious death of a fellow agent in East Berlin and uncovers a plot to start a third world war. Spy Adventure, starring Roger Moore and Maud Adams.

6.40 Regional Programme: Weather.

6.45 ITV News: Weather. **7.00 Get Your Act Together.** Ray Quinn, Jamie Bolam, Claire Richards, Chip and last week's winner return to the stage with their mentors for the live final, hosted by Stephen Mulhern. Last in the series.

8.15 All Star Family Fortunes. Impressionist Jon Culshaw and Emmerdale actress Fiona Wade (Priya Sharma) team up with their families in an attempt to win a jackpot of £30,000 for charity. Vernon Kay hosts.

9.00 Mr Selfridge. Harry announces the acquisition of the Selfridge Estate – but Loyd is out to get him. Kitty receives unwelcome press attention and Princess Marie is forced to tell Lois the truth. Drama based on the life of Harry Gordon Selfridge, starring Jeremy Piven.

10.00 ITV News: Weather.

10.20 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive. Eight celebrities face a challenging 12-day expedition in the rainforest of Costa Rica, competing to remain in the programme each week and get through to the final. (R)

11.20 Premiership Rugby Union. Highlights of the latest top-flight fixtures, including Bath v Northampton Saints, Harlequins v Exeter Chiefs and London Irish v Leicester Tigers.

12.15 Tie Store. **2.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.15** ITV Nightscreen. (R) **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 NFL: Rush Zone. **6.45** How I Met Your Mother. **7.05** How I Met Your Mother. **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. **2.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.25** Film: Love Happens. (2009) Romantic drama, starring Aaron Eckhart and Jennifer Aniston. **4.35** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. Jasmine Harman helps Ann and Chris Goodwin from Leicestershire in their search for a Spanish holiday property in the hills west of Malaga.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Four Rooms. New series. Anita Rani returns with the show in which members of the public gamble offers they receive on prized possessions. Dealers Jeff Salmon, Wendy Meakin, Raj Bisram and Peter Ratcliffe dig deep into their pockets for a fenna racket once owned by Andy Murray, a piece of Admiral Nelson's Ship HMS Victory, artworks by Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon, and cutting-edge aircraft furniture.

8.00 The Auction House. Boss Roger announces his latest plan to increase profits – a new minimum price of £500 – while a cash-strapped artist hopes to raise the money for a deposit on a flat.

9.00 Indian Summers. A curfew is imposed to deal with the supposed terrorist threat, the arrival of a journalist causes trouble for Ralph, and Sarah turns detective to find out why Alice moved to India.

10.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Sean Lock and Jason Manford compete against guest captain Sarah Millican and Jonathan Ross, while Bill Bailey joins Susie Dent in Dictionary Corner. Last in the series. (R)

11.05 Film: Moonrise Kingdom. (2012) Premiere. The inhabitants of an island community are thrown into a panic as they search for two runaway children. Wes Anderson's comedy drama, with Bruce Willis and Edward Norton.

12.50 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **1.40** The Fifteen Pound Drop. (R) **2.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.45** Deal or No Deal. (R) **5.35** Face the Clock. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloe's Closet. **7.05** Mio Mao. (R) **7.10** Olly the Little White Van. **7.15** Barnaby Bear. (R) **7.30** Pyjama Party. (R) **7.45** Way or Noddy. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottie Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **8.40** Zack and Quack. (R) **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** Lazy Town. (R) **10.00** SpongeBob SquarePants. **10.35** The Dog Rescuers. (R) **11.00** Robson's Extreme Fishing Challenge. (R) **12.00** Robson's Extreme Fishing Challenge. (R) **1.00** Film: Innerspace. (1987) Sci-fi comedy, starring Dennis Quaid. **3.20** Film: Stand By Me. (1986) Coming-of-age drama, starring River Phoenix. **5.55** Film: Honey, I Shrunk the Kids. (1989) Disney comedy, starring Rick Moranis.

6.45 Film: WarGames. (1983) A teenager hacks into a top-secret military supercomputer, which challenges him to what he thinks is a game. However, the machine has complete control of US nuclear arsenals, and the youngster's actions are unwittingly pushing the world to the brink of war. Thriller, starring Matthew Broderick, Ally Sheedy, Dabney Coleman and John Wood. Part of the 80s Movie Marathon. Edited for language and flashing images.

8.55 5 News Weekend. **9.00 Film:** Top Gun. (1986) An arrogant pilot's Maverick flying skills earn him a place in an elite US Navy school, where he comes into conflict with a fellow student and falls for his civilian instructor. A tragedy in the air threatens to end his military career – until an international incident offers him a chance to redeem himself. Aerial action adventure, starring Tom Cruise, Kelly McGillis, Val Kilmer, Anthony Edwards and Tom Skerritt. Part of the 80s Movie Marathon.

11.15 Film: Young Guns. (1988) Billy the Kid and his gang become outlaws as they seek revenge for their employer's murder by a rival rancher. Western, starring Emilio Estevez, Kiefer Sutherland and Charlie Sheen. Part of the 80s Movie Marathon.

12.55 SuperCasino. **3.10** **10.00** BC. (R) **4.00** Film: Doctor. (R) **4.25** Macbeth. (R) **5.15** Angels of Jarni. (R) **5.40** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL**BBC Three**

7.00 Great Movie Mistakes 2: The Sequel. **7.05** Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes. **7.35** The Voice UK 9.00 Russell Howard's Good News. **10.00** I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse. **11.00** Family Guy 11.45 Uncle 12.15 American Dad! **12.35** I Survived a Zombie Apocalypse. **1.35** Bangkok Airport 2.30 South Side Story. **3.00** Bangkok Airport 3.35 Close.

BBC Four

7.00 The Great War 7.40 Britain's Wild Places. **8.00** Mark Lawson Talks to Kazuo Ishiguro. **9.00** Storyville: Love Is All 10.55 Film: Mystery Road (2013). **12.10** Status Quo: Live and Acoustic 1.10 When Rock Goes Acoustic 2.10 Acoustic at the BBC 3.10 Sounds of the 70s 2 New Wave – Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick 3.40 Close.

ITV2

11.45 Take Me Out 1.00 Take Me Out – The Gossip 1.45 You've Been Framed. **2.10** Scorpion 3.05 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway 4.35 Film: Nanny McPhee (2005) **6.30** Film: Jurassic Park (1993) **9.00** biza Weekender 10.00 The Kelti Lemon Sketch Show 11.00 Cricket World Cup Highlights 11.00 Film: Terriers & Cast 1988 1.10 Hall on Wheels 1.55 The Professionals 2.45 Miles Now 2.55 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping

E4

12.30 Revenge 1.30 Marvel's Agents of SHIELD 2.30 The 100 3.30 Film: Fury Vengeance (2010) 2.50 Rudolph the Tube Shorts 5.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 6.00 The Big Bang Theory 10.00 The Inbetweeners 11.00 The Inbetweeners Top 10 Moments 12.10 Taking New York 1.15 Rules of Engagement 2.15 The New Normal 3.00 Suburbicon 3.20 Hollywoods Film 4.00 At the Earth's Core (1976) 1.00 The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010) 3.20 The 7th Voyage of Sinbad 1952 5.10 A Month in Paris 2013 6.55 The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008) 9.00 The A Team (2010) 11.20 Mc, Myself and Irene (2000) 1.40 Aralario (1957) 4.00 Close

11.40 Goodnight Mister Tom 1.50 Agatha Christie's Marple 3.50 Rosemary & Thyme 4.55 Inspector Morse 7.00 Lewis 9.00 Sunday Night at the Palladium 10.00 Birds of a Feather 10.30 City Lights 11.35 Film: The Portrait of a Lady (1996) 2.15 Countrywise 3.10 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.40 Emmerdale

ITV4

11.40 Paw Stars 2.25 Film: Dunkirk (1958) 5.10 Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol (1987) 7.00 The Big Fish Off 8.00 Premiership Rugby Union 9.00 Harry's South Pole Heroes 10.00 Cricket World Cup Highlights 11.00 Film: Terriers & Cast 1988 1.10 Hall on Wheels 1.55 The Professionals 2.45 Miles Now 2.55 ITV4 Nightscreen 3.00 Teleshopping

Film4

11.00 At the Earth's Core (1976) **1.00** The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010) **3.20** The 7th Voyage of Sinbad 1952 **5.10** A Month in Paris 2013 **6.55** The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008) **9.00** The A Team (2010) **11.20** Mc, Myself and Irene (2000) **1.40** Aralario (1957) **4.00** Close

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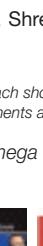
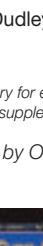
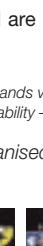
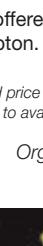
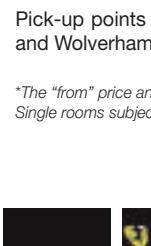
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MONDAY

Heist, BBC1, 12.30am

A veteran criminal's charmed life comes to an abrupt end when he is caught on security camera. He is blackmailed by a dealer in stolen goods, who threatens to turn him over to the police if he does not carry out a gold robbery. The thief also suspects his wife is planning to leave him for a younger crook. Thriller from writer-director David Mamet, starring Gene Hackman, Danny DeVito and Ricky Jay. (2001)

TUESDAY

Carry On Henry, ITV, 11.40pm

King Henry VIII plots to rid himself of his new French wife when her craving for garlic becomes too much to cope with. However, he cannot afford to anger the king of France, and tries to make it look as if his queen has had an affair. Comedy, starring Sid James, Joan Sims, Kenneth Williams and Kenneth Connor. (1971)

WEDNESDAY

Citizenfour, Channel 4, 11.05pm

Laura Poitras' Bafta-winning documentary follows her meetings with whistleblower Edward Snowden, as he reveals evidence of a massive campaign of illegal surveillance carried out on US citizens by the country's National Security Agency. When the story goes public, they find themselves at the centre of a media storm and facing decisions that would have a huge impact on their lives. (2014)



Doubt, Friday, BBC2, 11.05pm

THURSDAY

Having You, BBC1, 11.45pm

A man with a fear of commitment finally manages to overcome his doubts and propose to his girlfriend. He finds himself facing new responsibilities when he runs into a woman he once had a one-night stand with, only to discover he is the father of her seven-year-old son. Drama, starring Anna Friel and Romola Garai. (2013)

FRIDAY

Doubt, BBC2, 11.05pm

A disciplinarian nun at a Catholic school in 1960s New York suspects a charismatic priest of behaving inappropriately with a student. A battle of wills ensues between the pair as she tries to gather definitive evidence beyond her own moral certainty. Drama based on director John Patrick Shanley's stage play, starring Meryl Streep and Philip Seymour Hoffman. (2008)

Hopefuls aim to step in the right direction

For some celebrities, squeezing themselves into a revealing outfit, getting coated in fake tan, and then shimmying around on national TV is practically their job description, so signing up for Strictly Come Dancing probably feels like just another day at the office.

However, for members of the public, the chance to enter the sequinned, glamorous world of televised ballroom dancing is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – which is where The People's Strictly comes in.

Last year, viewers were asked to nominate someone who they thought deserved the chance to trip the light fantastic. Out of the thousands of names put forward, six inspirational people were ultimately chosen, all of whom have worked selflessly to improve the lives of others.

Over the next four weeks, we'll see them learn to dance and perform a routine, culminating in one of them being crowned a champion as part of Comic Relief, but in this opening edition we start by meeting three of the remarkable contestants.

Lance Corporal Cassidy Little is a 33-year-old former Royal Marine medic, who lost his right leg below the knee during a tour of Afghanistan in the summer of 2011. Despite his horrific injuries, Cassidy attempted to tend to his colleagues on the ground after the attack, and is also credited with lifting the spirits of his fellow injured Marines during their intensive rehabilitation.

In 1999, Michael Pattie tragically lost his 13-year-old son Dave to meningitis, and since then has worked tirelessly to raise money for the Meningitis Research Foundation. His charity fundraisers have included Strictly-themed events in his native Dumfries, but now he's about to experience the real thing.

Meanwhile, Heather Parsons set up a charity to support intensive care patients and their families, inspired by her own experiences. It keeps her busy and she barely gets any time to herself – apart from on a Saturday evening when a certain pre-celebrity dance contest is on.

She says: "It's every little girl's dream to be in that sparkly outfit, being waltzed around the dance floor

with a lovely partner and Strictly makes that dream a reality for a couple of hours on a Saturday evening."

Now, she's about to get to experience it for herself as she's told that she's been chosen to take part in a suitably flamboyant manner.

Once they've all got over the shock, it's time to start training with their professional partners. They need to work hard, as in the third episode they and fellow contestants Philip Barnett, Trishna Bharadia and Anna Kennedy OBE, will face their first challenge – showing Craig Revel-Horwood what they've learned so far.

He'll give them a few pointers to work on, but the good news is that he won't actually be judging them. Due to a prior commitment, he's going to be Australia, and his place on the panel will be taken by Strictly favourite Anton du Beke who will join Darcey Bussell, Bruno Tonioli and head judge Len Goodman.

Perhaps there are some parts of the Strictly experience that are best left to the celebs after all...



The People's Strictly for Comic Relief, Wednesday, BBC1, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Broadchurch

ITV, 9pm

Meera Syal, aka Judge Sonia Sharma, jumped at the chance to star in series two of ITV's smash drama, but what was it about Chris Chibnall's scripts that attracted her? "He takes time," she explains. "It's the time and space in his scripts that he uses to delve into character. It's what drew people to watch The Killing. It's so much more about what are the effects of these events on people and to delve into their inner lives." This week it's the series finale, so fans can expect plenty of twists and turns for Alec (David Tennant) and Ellie (Olivia Colman) before those closing credits roll. Given the hit-and-miss nature of this second run, who knows whether Chibnall will deliver a third chapter?

NHS: £2billion a Week & Counting

Channel 4, 9pm

New series. A growing population, increased life expectancy, expensive medication and poor lifestyle choices are all contributing to a predicted £30-billion-plus funding gap in just over 10 years' time. This interactive series challenges viewers to put themselves in the position of doctors, managers and other health professionals as they try to determine where to allocate scarce resources

while facing complex dilemmas. The first programme considers liver transplants for alcoholics, cosmetic surgery and dementia.

TUESDAY

Mary Portas: Secret Shopper

Channel 4, 8pm

New series. The retail guru works with four businesses to help improve the quality of their customer service. At a family-run convenience store in Burnham, Buckinghamshire, she's shocked to see how staff behave when they don't know they're being filmed. Too much clowning around means out-of-date food is being left on the shelves, so Mary takes supervisor Dean and his team to a Michelin-starred restaurant to show them how to work well together. She also wants owner Keshu to rethink the products he stocks and give his savvy daughter Ash more responsibility.

WEDNESDAY

The Brit Awards 2015

ITV, 8pm

Ant and Dec host the star-studded ceremony live from London's O2, having last presented the show way back in 2001. This 35th

edition features music by some of the biggest names in the industry, including Taylor Swift, Take That, Paloma Faith, and Madonna, performing on the Brits for the first time in 20 years as she promotes her new album Rebel Heart. Sam Smith leads the pack with five nominations, closely followed by Ed Sheeran and George Ezra, who each received four, and rock duo Royal Blood, who have three.

They will all be battling it out for the coveted Album of the Year award alongside Alt-J, while Black Keys, First Aid Kit, Foo Fighters, the War on Drugs and 5 Seconds of Summer are all up for International Group.

THURSDAY

The Great British Sewing Bee

BBC2, 8pm

As the series progresses and more contestants are eliminated, it's becoming harder and harder to spot any weak links – or to decide who's ahead of the pack. Each week we have our own ideas about who has the title,



Mary Portas, Tuesday, Channel 4, 9pm

ahem, sewn up – but then the following episode changes everything. This week's challenges should weed out the sharpest needles, though, as the remaining amateur sewers are tested on their ability to add shape and structure to garments. They begin by creating a boned corset by sewing together 12 individual pieces of fabric, before breathing new life into a 1980s 'power' suit. Finally, they are challenged to make a traditional kilt from scratch, which proves one of their toughest tests to date.

FRIDAY

Bear Grylls: Mission Survive

ITV, 9pm

If you ever found yourself stuck in the middle of nowhere with only the searing sun and a few circling vultures for company, you'd do well to remember Bear Grylls' top tips for survival. Okay, the chances are slim that you'll ever find yourself in that set-up but these celebs have, and it's making for great entertainment. Tonight, tensions are high as the famous folk navigate their way through dense jungle down a ravine, before settling down to a meal of live scorpions. The next morning brings their first wash in three days, but they shouldn't let their guard down – Bear is about to explain the team's first big test: a descent of a 120ft waterfall. And soon enough, one more celeb will be eliminated...

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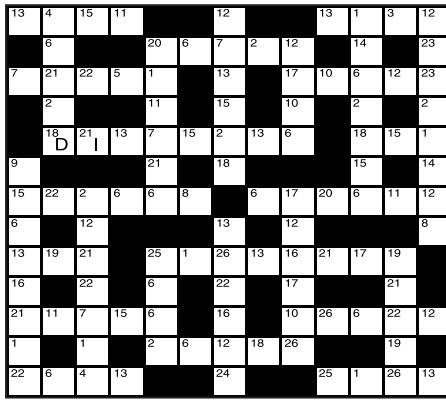
Monday - Friday 9am 5pm

Saturday 9.30 am 5 pm



Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	G	T	3	U	S	P	X	K	C	B	O	R	H	Q
14	I	2	W	Z	I	D	A	E	V	J	N	L	Y	13

Quiz

- Which German school of design was closed by the Nazis in 1933?
- Who was Hero's lover?
- Which ore is the chief source of Uranium?
- Who wrote the novel Daniel Deronda?
- Which country's bobsleigh team inspired the film Cool Runnings?
- Which painter immortalised his native village of Cookham in Berkshire?
- How is the house plant Chlorophytum elatum better known?
- On which metallic element does verdigris form?
- By what name are the Trucial States now known?
- Who played young attorney Andy Beckett in Philadelphia?

Double Crossword

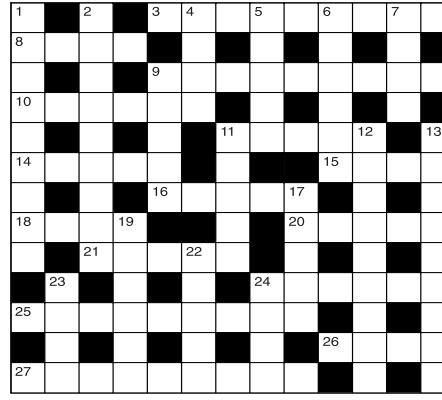
Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:**Across**

- Make a stop on the way? (9)
- Bird associated with a crow (4)
- Explain how to record one's vote? (3,6)
- She's not so smart as her mate (6)
- He gives the fellow an alternative (5)
- A yachtsman, we hear, may be one who sneers (5)
- Food crazy (4)
- A place where waiters are forgotten? (5)
- Cry from a small boat (4)
- A rich mixture at the table (5)
- Provides food and lodgings in castles (5)
- Her sisters are not really her sisters (6)
- Nobody pays an egg-producer around the end of October! (9)
- He sold his birth-right among the saucyans (4)
- What he wants is no good to another (3-6)

Down

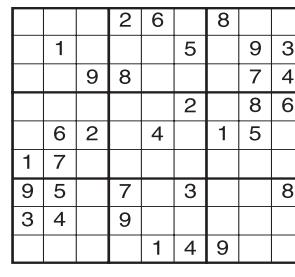
- He's given unwarranted responsibility (9)
- As a personal record, it's rather fragmentary (9)
- English name, no French one (4)
- Time to mosey (5)
- Copy-paper (6)
- Its tower is inclined to attract tourists (4)
- A gem looks right in a ring (5)
- Maud's involved with a French writer (5)
- Rush over to meet (3,6)
- He must have space to work in (9)
- A once-rough sea (5)
- Colour that would run? (6)
- They're in the front row when the game starts (5)
- A visit from a local luminary (4)
- Measure encountered over the East (4)
- Barren (9)

**Quick Clues:****Across**

- Policeman (9)
- Censure (9)
- Heedless (9)
- Leap (6)
- Gloss (5)
- Concede (5)
- Entice (4)
- Rub out (5)
- Yearn (4)
- Mistake (5)
- Impel (5)
- Gloomy (6)
- Parody (9)
- Responsibility (4)
- Barren (9)

Down

- Club (6)
- Adjoin (4)
- Combine (5)
- Form (5)
- Food (9)
- Calous (9)
- Weird (5)
- Grating (6)
- Call (5)
- Revolution (4)
- Barren (9)

Sudoku

FILL IN THE GRID BELOW SO THAT EVERY COLUMN, EVERY ROW AND EACH OF THE 3x3 BOXES CONTAINS ALL THE DIGITS FROM 1 TO 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	1	4	5	6	9	3	8	2
9	6	3	4	8	2	1	5	7
5	8	2	7	3	1	4	6	9
6	4	9	3	5	8	7	2	1
8	3	1	9	2	7	5	4	6
2	5	7	6	1	4	8	9	3
3	2	5	1	4	6	9	7	8
1	9	8	2	7	5	6	3	4
4	7	6	8	9	3	2	1	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Heir; 3 Apparent; 8 Nine; 9 Division; 11 Straightness; 13 Meddle; 14 Strafe; 17 Night-clothes; 20 Clinging; 21 Cain; 22 Signpost; 23 Stale. Down: 1 Handsome; 2 Ignored; 4 Plight; 5 Alliteration; 6 Exits; 7 10 Fill the gap; 12 Reassured; 15 Athwart; 16 Entoments; 18 Icing; 19 Ads. QUICK - Across: 1 Cosy; 3 Proprietary; 8 Near; 9 Evermoney; 11 Extrangement; 13 Stroke; 14 Staple; 17 Indifference; 20 Invoices; 21 Magi; 22 Relegate; 23 Stay. Down: 1 Condense; 2 Shatter; 4 Ravage; 5 Peremptory; 6 Scorn; 7 Leek; 10 Backbiting; 12 Temptation; 15 Pendant; 16 Affect; 18 Novel; 19 Pier.

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 15534** gives a tree,
62834 gives another tree,
8795 gives a flower.



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An Express & Star supplement

Express & Star

Well-presented detached with four bedrooms



AN extremely well presented unfurnished four-bedroom detached property in Southern Close, Stourbridge is available to rent through Town & Country at £795 pcm.

In a popular residential location it has a reception hall, WC, lounge with a gas fire, dining room, extended kitchen, conservatory, utility, four good-sized bedrooms, bathroom with a shower over, gas central heating, double glazing and a rear garden with a garage.

Call 01384 444855 or visit www.townandcountrypropertyservices.co.uk



Semi-detached with the space for an extension



HAVING a side garden with space for an extension, subject to consent, a three-bedroomed semi in Holly Road, Oldbury is for sale through Braithwaites at £159,950 with no chain.

In need of modernisation and having gas central heating and majority double glazing it has a lounge/dining area with sliding patio doors out to the rear garden, a kitchen, three bedrooms, bathroom with a separate WC, front gardens and a garage and driveway bordering a hedged frontage.

Contact 0121 4211180 or visit www.braithwaites-estate-agents.co.uk



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HALESOWEN, Newton Court £725 pcm+ Fees
A recently converted 3 bedroom ground floor apartment finished to an extremely high standard and centrally located with commuter links to Halesowen and Birmingham. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, both with fitted wardrobes, 2 bathrooms, 1 single bedroom, 2 extra rooms downstairs, secondary glazing throughout. Allocated parking. Viewings recommended. EPC: C



AMBLECOTE, High Street £725 pcm+ Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a new build home on a select development. Featuring homes of 3 generous size bedrooms (master with en-suite) finished to an exceptional standard. Featuring spacious lounge/dining areas, well appointed kitchens, downstairs WC, 3 bedrooms with family bathrooms & master bedroom with en-suite. 2 allocated parking spaces front & rear gardens. These homes will not be available for long. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Melbourne Road £695 pcm+ Fees
Within walking distance to Halesowen, is this 3 story town house. Well worth an inspection inside and set within a quiet cul-de-sac, comprising of: 3 bedrooms, large fitted dining kitchen, very large lounge, downstairs wc, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, off road parking for 1/2 cars and garage, close to local schools and college. EPC: E



ROWLEY REGIS, Fairbourne Avenue £675 pcm+ Fees
Perfect for a family and close to the M5. A large Musgrove Style detached home which is available now, close to local shops and bus routes. Featuring 2 double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes and 1 large single bedroom, 2 good size lounges, large kitchen, downstairs wc, shower room, gas central heating, new windows, huge rear garden, driveway and garage. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Sanderson Place £655 pcm+ Fees
Luxury living in Hayley Green. A superb ground floor apartment offering spacious accommodation including open plan lounge/kitchen and diner, 2 double bedrooms, master with en-suite, further well appointed bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing and allocated parking. EPC: B



HALESOWEN, West Road £625 pcm+ Fees
A lovely 3 bedroom traditional semi-detached house in this popular location for Colley Lane Primary School and the number 9 bus. Featuring a large lounge with fireplace, fitted kitchen, 2 double & 1 single bedroom, family bathroom, garage, driveway, front & rear gardens. Available now. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Tanhouse Lane £595 pcm+ Fees
A well presented 3 bed detached house with good transport links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This property features large lounge, kitchen/diner, utility room, bathroom with shower, garage and driveway parking. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: D



LYE, Chapel Street £595 pcm+ Fees
A 3 bedroom unfurnished or part furnished to suit detached property which has been totally renovated to a very high specification. Must be viewed to be fully appreciated. The property has an entrance hall, 2 reception rooms, open plan kitchen with all brand new appliances, large downstairs bathroom with shower, separate w.c., 3 double bedrooms, gas central heating, maintenance free garden, on road parking. Available immediately. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Witton Bank £550 pcm+ Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom 2nd floor apartment in a very sought after location. Having secure intercom entry, entrance hall, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom, large lounge, kitchen, garage en block and communal gardens. Available immediately. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Meadow Walk £550 pcm+ Fees
Modern semi-detached house within a popular residential area featuring gas central heating, spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen, downstairs house bathroom, 3 good size bedrooms, large rear garden, driveway parking for 2 cars. Available immediately. EPC: E



HALESOWEN, Quarry Hill £550 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished semi-detached house with stunning views of Clent featuring gas central heating, 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs w.c., 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, rear garden, off road parking. Available now. EPC: TBC



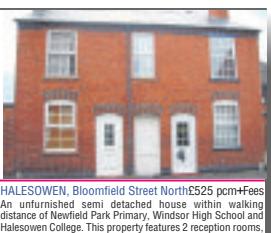
HALESOWEN, Ladysmith Road £550 pcm+ Fees
A mid-terrace house in a sought after area for Colley Lane Primary School, bus links to Halesowen and Stourbridge. This house features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, dining area, new downstairs shower room, 2 good sized bedrooms, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Malt Mill Lane £535 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished mid terraced house, within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and not far from Rowley Regis train station, briefly comprising of: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs shower room, 2 double bedrooms. Benefits include rear garden, off road parking. EPC: D



STOURBRIDGE, Churchill Drive £525 pcm+ Fees
Lovely spacious 3 bedroom semi-detached home is available in this quiet cul-de-sac. Features include large living room, dining room and modern fitted kitchen with integrated appliances, downstairs bathroom and further shower room upstairs with 2 double and 1 single bedroom. Driveway parking. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Bloomfield Street North £525 pcm+ Fees
An unfurnished semi-detached house within walking distance of Newfield Primary, Windsor High School and Halesowen College. This property features 2 reception rooms, 2 double bedrooms both with fitted wardrobes, downstairs bathroom with shower, upstairs shower room, fitted kitchen, gas central heating, double glazing. EPC: E



KIDDERMINSTER, Keats Place £495 pcm+ Fees
A well presented 2 bedroom ground floor flat, briefly comprising of: 2 bedrooms with wardrobes, spacious lounge, refitted kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, gas central heating, double glazing and cul de sac location. Virgin Broadband connection is available. Own entrance to the property. EPC: C



TIPTON, Ferguson Drive £495 pcm+ Fees
A lovely modern ground floor part furnished apartment, briefly comprising of: 2 bedrooms with wardrobes, spacious lounge, electric storage heating, double glazing, 2 allocated parking spaces, communal gardens, internal viewing recommended. EPC: D



CRADLEY HEATH, Elbow Street £475 pcm+ Fees
Situated in a quiet location, within walking distance to Old Hill town and local train station this unfurnished ground floor flat comprising electric storage heating, large living room, fitted kitchen, 1 double and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower, communal gardens, allocated parking. EPC: C



HALESOWEN, Belgrave Road £450 pcm+ Fees
A large ground floor modern apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and local buses. Featuring a spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 1 double bedroom, newly fitted bathroom suite with shower, Gas central heating, small rear garden with private entrance. Available Now. EPC: TBC



ROWLEY REGIS, The Link £425 pcm+ Fees
Located close to the M5 J2 is this quiet and spacious unfurnished ground floor apartment, briefly comprising of: electric storage heating, open plan living room/kitchen, with white goods, 1 double bedroom with built in wardrobe, house bathroom with shower, parking space to rear. EPC: C



CRADLEY HEATH, Victoria Gardens £395 pcm+ Fees
A modern top floor apartment, in the centre of Old Hill with local bus stop outside and Old Hill train station close by. This apartment comprises of 1 double bedroom, electric storage heating, double glazing, fitted kitchen, bathroom with shower, allocated parking, unfurnished. EPC: C

New SR7s now available

By Sharon Walters

New, top-value SR7 versions of four favourite Kia models are available across the company's dealer network.

Every SR7 has a higher specification than the 2014 VR7 special-edition models.

LED daytime running lights, cornering lights, front foglights, automatic headlight control, privacy glass, UV-reducing solar glass, dual-zone automatic air conditioning and roof rails are the highlights of the equipment additions, depending on model. There are also new alloy wheels and colour options.

This is just the start of a list of new models, facelifts and product enhancements during 2015, spearheaded by a new Sorento. There will be a new grade '4' version of the Carens; facelifts for the Rio and Venga; an Alpine Edition Sportage and further options with the Soul Mixx and Maxx.

The Rio and Venga SR7 will be based on the respective facelifted models now in UK showrooms. The Rio SR7 is available as a three- or five-door with an 84bhp, 1.25-litre petrol engine, or as a five-door with a 1.1-litre diesel featuring Kia's ISG stop/start system. In each case the SR7 sits between the normal '1 Air' and '2' grades in the line-up.

The Rio SR7 features automatic headlight control, privacy glass on the rear windows and tailgate and UV-reducing solar glass in addition to the highlights from last year's VR7 of air conditioning, reversing sensors, a leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearshifter, Bluetooth, USB and AUX ports, electrically-adjustable heated door

mirrors and electric windows (all four on five-door versions). It has the same premium black cloth upholstery fitted to the latest '2' and '3' trim grades, and bespoke 15in alloy wheels.

The Venga SR7 is available with 89bhp 1.4-litre petrol and diesel engines. ISG is fitted to the petrol unit. The SR7 sits between '1 Air' and '2' trim grades and has automatic headlight control and privacy glass on the rear windows and tailgate in addition to the VR7 key features of air conditioning, reversing sensors, Bluetooth, USB and AUX ports, electrically-adjustable heated door mirrors and electric windows.

Striking

The upholstery is the striking new Houndstooth cloth with red stitching from the facelifted Venga '1' and '1 Air', with the stitching echoed in the leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearshifter. The stylish 16in alloy wheels are the same as those fitted to Venga '2', '3' and '4' grades, while the one solid paint option (Arctic White) and three metallics (Silver Storm, Phantom Black and Infra Red) are those offered with the latest Venga '1' and '1 Air'.

The new pro-ceed SR7 slots just below the regular 'S' grade, while the cee'd and cee'd Sportwagon SR7 fit between regular tiers '1' and '2'. All three body styles are available with a 98bhp, 1.4-litre petrol engine, while the five-door cee'd also offers 89bhp, 1.4-litre diesel.

Every version has LED daytime running lights, cornering lights, front foglights, automatic headlight control and privacy glass on the rear windows and tailgate which were not available on the 2014 VR7. Key features carried over include air condition-



'This is just the start of a list of new models, facelifts and product enhancements during 2015, spearheaded by a new Sorento'

ing, reversing sensors, a leather-trimmed steering wheel and gearshifter, Bluetooth, USB and AUX ports, electrically-adjustable heated door mirrors and electric windows (all four on five-door versions). The upholstery is black Abstract, also found on the level '1' cee'd and Sportwagon, while the double-five-spoke 16in alloy wheels replicate those on the cee'd '2' and '3'.

The Carens SR7 offers buyers the choice of two direct-injection engines – the 1.6-litre GDI petrol unit or the 1.7-litre CRDi diesel. Both are fitted with ISG to maximise fuel economy and minimise CO2 emissions. This brings the CO2 output of the

SR7 1.6 GDI down to 120g/km – the lowest in the Carens range.

Standard premium features include LED daytime running lights, front foglights, automatic headlight control, 16in alloy wheels, privacy glass on the rear windows and tailgate, premium cloth seats, reversing sensors, dual automatic air conditioning and roof rails.

The new grade '4' version of the Carens, powered by the 134bhp, 1.7-litre CRDi engine paired with either a six-speed manual or six-speed automatic transmission, has been added at the top of the range to replace the former '3 Sat Nav' model.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Highest: VAUXHALL Adam 3 Door Hatchback 1.4i 100PS Slam with 14", 15", 16", 17" and 18" wheels, M5: Urban: 38.2 (7.4), Extra-urban: 62.8 (4.5), Combined: 51.4 (5.5). CO₂ emissions: 130g/km. Lowest: Adam 3 Door Hatchback 1.2i 70PS Jam Start/Stop with 14", 15", 16" and 17" wheels, M5: Urban: 43.5 (6.5), Extra-urban: 67.3 (4.2), Combined: 56.5 (5.0). CO₂ emissions: 118g/km.

Available at participating retailers only. Conditional Sale. Offers available on orders or registrations made by 31st March 2015. Pictures for illustration purposes only. *Offer subject to availability at participating Retailers only. Personal Contract Purchase. Finance subject to status. Terms and Conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 years or over. Finance by Vauxhall Finance. P.O Box 6666, Cardiff CF15 7YU. 24-36 month term available. At the end of the agreement there are three options: i) Retain the vehicle. Pay the optional final payment to own the vehicle. ii) Return the vehicle. or iii) Replace. Part Exchange the vehicle, where equity is available. We can introduce you to a limited number of finance providers, commission may be received. Subject to our fair wear and tear terms and conditions. tFree insurance Terms and Conditions-First year insurance offer available on ADAM models only, excluding ADAM GRAND SLAM. All drivers must have held a valid full UK licence for a minimum of 1 year. All policies are underwritten by Ageas Insurance Ltd. Ask for full terms and conditions. Offer available on orders or registrations between 9 February and 6 April 2015.



Style and practicality

By Sharon Walters

I have to put my hands up – I am a bit of a car snob when it comes to estates. Many of the family orientated and middle of the road ones are, well, just plain boring and dull. Dull to look at because they are just the saloon version with a bit added on without thought to style, and to drive. Although, don't get me wrong, they do just what they are intended to.

Move up the price scale and there are some great estates. Ones that look fantastic because more thought has gone into the design and ones which are so pleasing to get behind the wheel of and hit the road.



There are some exceptions, however, and the 308 SW from Peugeot is one. It is based on the multi award-winning 308 which is currently European Car of the Year – an award that was very well deserved.

The Peugeot 308 SW is that rarity – a compact estate car that not only looks good but is practical too. It also has a classy interior, a state-of-the-art chassis and excellent efficiency numbers. Forget what you thought you knew about small estates. This one comes with a rare injection of desirability. And indeed attracted high praise indeed from one of my friends who is even more picky about her cars!

The 308 SW rides on the same chassis as the hatch and the ride is refined with a relaxed gait. There's no bouncing about even on the single and rather off the beaten track roads the sat nav took me to during a trip to the Forest of Dean. The electrically-assisted power steering is geared towards ease of use rather than detailed feedback. It makes the 308 SW comfortable around town in the sort of usage it will mostly see. And I like the compact steering wheel which makes it feel quite sporty.

The petrol engine line up is based around a PureTech 1.2-litre e-THP three-cylinder engine offering either 110 or 130bhp. The diesel option is a 1.6-litre turbo with a base version with 92bhp or an e-HDi model with 115bhp and Stop-Start. Next up are the new generation BlueHDi diesels, either a 1.6 with 120bhp or a 2.0-litre unit with 150bhp, the latter with the option of auto transmission.

It's hardly surprising that the 308 SW scores highly as Peugeot has a track record in this sector. Since the arrival of the 304 in 1969, every generation of the 300 series has included an estate variant and estates tend to mop up around 10 per cent of C-segment cars. This one might account for a little more than one in ten Peugeot 308 sales. There's usually a lot of nonsense spoken by car stylists but the buzzwords around the 308 SW really do ring



true. Stretched, slender, fluid and dynamic, it's anything but your usual hatchback with an afterthought of a bigger boot rather clumsily attached.

There's plenty of space in the back, 660 litres, which includes 70 litres of storage under the floor. Fold down the Magic Flat rear seats which allow instant folding of both parts of the rear seat which provide a flat floor and 1,660 litres of luggage space. Space and practicality are enhanced by the vertical side walls which have minimal wheel arch intrusion. Plus the load sill is among the lowest of any estate car. Prices start from around £17,000 and all models include Bluetooth, air conditioning and a DAB radio. One of the biggest attractions of the interior is the 9.7-inch multi-function infotainment touchscreen but you don't get that on the entry Access level.

The range-topping Feline model gets leather and Alcantara seats, or you can pay a bit more

and go for full leather. This features subtle stitching, some impressive fluting and a particularly comfortable shape. The optional electric adjustment includes a variable massage function. Open the cover on the panoramic full-length glass roof and you feel you are in a swanky limo.

Minus point for me is the electric parking brake – perhaps it's an age thing about feeling uncomfortable with it – but the one fitted to the 308 is better than others.

No diesel engine in the 308 SW range emits more than 111g/km. The new BlueHDi 1.6-litre 120bhp diesel which, when linked to a six-speed manual gearbox, records a combined cycle fuel consumption figure of 88.3mpg and emissions of 85g/km, a record in the segment.

The 308 SW is that rarest of things; a compact estate with genuine style. If you want style, practicality, performance and space in one option it may just be up your street.

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X-perience with the Brownlee brothers

By David Banner

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SEAT has partnered with World Champion triathletes and Olympians Alistair and Jonny Brownlee to launch its new four-wheel-drive model, the Leon X-PERIENCE.

As part of a comprehensive project with the Telegraph Media Group, the sporty Spanish car brand has set a media campaign in motion entitled the 'Brownlee Brothers X-PERIENCE - Tri Another Way'.

The first element of the campaign is the creation of five films with the super-fit duo to highlight the outdoor adventure lifestyle and off-road capability of the Leon X-PERIENCE. The first two, 'Meet the Brownlees' and 'Train like the Brownlees' are now showing on a specially created online hub, www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/motoring/seat-adventure/.

A further three have been produced based on the usual triathlon disciplines, and will see the brothers race each other in man versus machine (Leon X-PERIENCE) challenges, leading to a nailbiting finale, all set in their beloved Yorkshire.

The second part involves SEAT being the headline sponsor of the Daily Telegraph Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show at ExCeL, London, running until Sunday. The UK's largest exhibition for adventurous people also includes access to three other shows at the same venue: Triathlon Show: London, The London Bike Show and The London International Dive Show (latter is weekend only). As well as the chance to meet the brothers, on the Saturday, SEAT will also be putting on plenty to attract showgoers throughout the event.

Visitors will be able to pit their wits against the elite athletes in three head-to-heads, using two static bikes side by side on rollers, a rowing machine and lastly, a treadmill. Prizes will be up for grabs for those who get the closest to, or even beat, the times set by the brothers in the cycling challenge, as well as one for the overall winner. There will also be SEAT giveaways on its stand, whether you're a committed fitness type, or festive excesses pound shredder, including USB keys with triathlon training tips and a nutrition guide created with the Brownlee brothers.

Battle

If that's not enough, there will also be the chance to catch the third video, released at the show, in a dedicated cinema area on the SEAT stand where the Olympians take on the rugged Leon X-PERIENCE in their first battle. Visitors can get behind the wheel of the four-wheel-drive model too, as well as several other Leons. Those looking for a more sedate day out can just admire the latter take on a specially created off-road area in the main exhibition hall, or simply sit back and relax in the SEAT sponsored café.

The recently launched estate car features all-road suspension, extra ground clearance and permanently on demand four-wheel-drive, meaning it is as at home on gravel and snow as it is on tarmac. Beneath its upmarket off-road look, it retains all of the Leon ST's trademark practicality, with a sizeable 587-litre boot – perfect for families, as well as adventurous types like triathletes, cyclists and climbers, who require lots of space to transport equipment.

SEAT is currently running a launch offer whereby the first 100 retail customers will each receive £500 worth of vouchers to spend with Tri UK, at the world's largest triathlon store, or online. Twenty of them have already been snapped up, in the car's first month in showrooms.

London's ExCeL will play host to not one, but two, UK debuts as the eagerly-awaited Leon ST CUPRA 280 also takes to the stand. The latest addition to SEAT's CUPRA line-up boasts the same capacious 587-litre boot as the rest of the Leon Sports Tourer (ST) range, but comes with a devilish two-litre 280 PS engine which can power it from nought to 62 mph in just 6.0 seconds.

Speaking about their partnership with SEAT, Alistair commented, "We had brilliant fun filming the Challenges – we chose the ideal location in the Yorkshire Dales to make it tough for the car and for us. The car was really enjoyable to drive, but you'll need to watch the films to see who ended up winning." Jonny added, "It's been a great project to be involved with and hopefully people will enjoy the films and find them useful for their training as well."

Andy McGregor, SEAT UK's National Communications & Digital Marketing Manager, said, "We successfully launched the first Leon estate, the ST (Sports Tourer) at the three Daily Telegraph shows last year, so it was an easy decision to try and emulate it for our newcomer, the Leon X-PERIENCE. It's got a healthy dose of style, with a really premium feel and off-road capability, all perfect ingredients for many visitors to the shows who are seeking a good-looking and reliable car in which to escape. We're also delighted to be working with the Brownlee brothers, who will take us into previously unchartered territory for the SEAT range."

For more information on the SEAT line-up, as well as details of your closest dealer, log onto www.seat.co.uk or call 0500 222222. All the latest SEAT news is also available on Twitter @SEAT_cars_uk and www.facebook.com/seatuk

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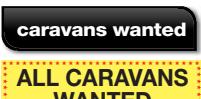
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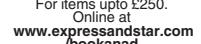


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8

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Club is runner-up at swim contest

Glenthorne Junior Trophy Gala

JUNIOR swimmers from Halesowen Swimming travelled to Cheslyn Hay. The gala soon developed into a two-horse race between hosts Chase and Halesowen. However, Halesowen had to settle for runners-up spot by just two points.

Double individual event winner was Jacob Bailey in the breaststroke and backstroke with other event winners Chloe Everton in the breaststroke and Jamie Worton - butterfly.

The relay teams were on form with the age nine girls and 11 and under boys teams unbeatable in both freestyle and medley events including Alice Clare, Grace Coles, Freya Dunn, Francesca Jeacock, Hannah Willis, Oliver Bradley-Wood, Dermot Cameron, Dominic Crees, Greg Shepherd and Joe South.

The age 10 and under boys team including Noah Hanke and Adam Ryan also won the freestyle relay. Special mention also goes to Alice Clare, Grace Coles, Freya Dunn, Francesca Jeacock, Ruby Norgrove, Hannah Willis, Theo Evans, Jack Everton, Thomas Jones, Jacob Smith, Joe South and William Walker.

Danny gets the winner for Tividale

Tividale 1 Kidsgrove 0

IN their first home game since New Year's Day, Tividale battled their way to Evo-Stik First Division South points against an improving Kidsgrove Athletic.

Tividale should have gone ahead after nine minutes when Jordan Archer was upended by Kidsgrove's Dave McPherson with the referee pointing to the spot.

Zach Foster stepped up to take the penalty but dragged the ball wide of the right hand post.

Andy Kinsey had the first effort on target in the second half. Tiv's skipper Richard Huckfield then headed over a Foster corner.

But the hosts grabbed the winner five minutes later through Danny Ashton.

Villa edge their way into quarter finals

Villa 2 Leicester 1

TIM Sherwood saw his new Villa side edge into the FA Cup quarter-finals with a 2-1 win over Leicester.

Sherwood had a watching brief but, after a goalless opening 45 minutes, his half-time team-talk seemed to galvanise Villa and goals from Leandro Bacuna and Scott Sinclair settled a scrappy game.

Andrej Kramaric netted an injury-time goal for the Foxes but they could not force a replay.

First-team coach Scott Marshall took charge of Villa after ex-Tottenham boss Sherwood was appointed as Paul Lambert's

successor on Saturday.

Marcin Wasilewski hit the post for Leicester and Shay Given denied Matty James, while Christian Benteke and Andi Weimann had goals ruled out for offside for the hosts.

But Villa reached the last eight for the first time since 2010 despite their late scare.

Benteke, Bacuna, Ron Vlaar, Tom Cleverley and Given all returned for Villa while Leicester replaced the cup-tied Robert Huth

with Wasilewski. Foxes boss Nigel Pearson was also in the stands and would have been worried by the Foxes' slow start.

Eager to impress, Villa opened well and Weimann blazed over from 16 yards but their attacking threat waned, showing Sherwood the immediate problem he needs to fix.

While there was plenty of endeavour, the hosts lacked quality with Benteke isolated and unable to seriously trouble the Foxes defence.

It gave Leicester encouragement and Wasilewski glanced James' corner across goal and onto the face of the far post after 12

minutes. Jeff Schlupp's pass was dummied by Esteban Cambiasso for James to arrow a shot towards the top corner, only for Given to save. Villa thought they were ahead a minute before the break when Benteke swept into the corner, but it was ruled offside.

The hosts began the second half well and Fabian Delph's mis-hit header flew over.

Bacuna unleashed a curling effort into the bottom corner.

Villa made it 2-0 in the 89th minute through a Schwarzer own goal.

Leicester hit back in stoppage time when Kramaric headed in Schlupp's cross.

Moseley overrun by in-form Carolians

KCRFC 40 Moseley Oak 5

IN form Kidderminster Carolians made it five wins in a row in league and cup with this convincing display in the semi-final of the North Mids Shield.

Now on May 10 they will face either Bridgorth or Malvern in the final.

It was clear KC's game plan was to run the Moseley forwards around at every opportunity and they dominated the first 15 minutes.

The home side were however, playing at a great tempo and in the 13th minute opened the scoring when left wing Laurence Hughes ran under the posts. Chris Pinner converted.

Ten minutes later the visitors' winger Jack McLaren reduced the arrears to 7-5.

Just before half time skipper Rob Delahay scored and Pinner again converted.

Three minutes into the second period Rhys Pritchard managed to stretch over at the right corner.

A pass by Pritchard to Morgan sent the No.13 in for a try converted by Pinner.

KC put the game to bed with two tries from Hatch and Pritchard.

Tipton are taken out by Corey's one shot

Tipton Town 0 Walsall Wood 1

WOOD took their unbeaten league run to six, taking 16 points in the process, as they moved into the top six for the first time this season.

The win came courtesy of a Corey Currithers' 72nd minute free kick and another superb defensive display that included a Mario Kisiel penalty save.

After five minutes the returning Harry Harris raced onto a ball left of the box, his rising drive pushed behind by keeper Jack Hayfield.

A minute later it was Joe Pickering collecting a Ben Evans through ball as he cut into the right of the box and fired a cross shot wide.

Town's first effort on goal came on seven minutes, live wire Gurjit Singh cutting in from wide left and setting up David Meese, his first time effort deflected for a corner.

The flag kick was easily cleared but was collected by Singh right of centre, he went for goal going through 3 tackles only to fire just over the bar.

A left wing run by Corey Currithers on 21 minutes won Wood a corner, Anthony Juxon powering a header just too high.

An immediate reply saw Chris Poynt make space wide left before cutting across the face of the box, his shot was deflected and a scramble developed in the 6 yard box, the ball stabbed against the foot of the right hand post by Singh and hurriedly hacked to safety.

He took the free kick himself, his drive bouncing over the outstretched right hand of the diving Hayfield.

Jamie Saunton, loud penalty appeals waved away.

The last action of the half saw Andre Gonzales put Currithers clear wide left, he cut into the box but was stopped by a great tackle by Ash Stewart, the defenders hurried clearance went straight to Gonzales 40 yards from goal, seeing the keeper off his line he hit a first time long-range effort well wide.

After a quiet opening to the second half it was that man, Singh again causing problems for the Wood defence, he won a free kick just outside the left of the box, he took the free kick himself, firing the ball into the top left hand corner, Kisiel at full stretch pushing the ball over the top.

From the corner Rhys Lynton powered a header just over.

After an untidy spell, Currithers cut in from wide right, going through three tackles before he was brought down from behind about 30 yards out.

He took the free kick himself, his drive bouncing over the outstretched right hand of the diving Hayfield.

Heathens motoring with new sponsorship



Motor Market's Dean and Adam Bridge with Cradley boss Will Pottinger.
Picture Jonathan Hipkiss

CRADLEY have a new team sponsorship deal to take the club to Perry Barr.

The reigning City Gearboxes National League champions, who have switched home meetings from Wolverhampton to Birmingham, are keeping it local with main sponsors Motor Market stepping up from their team partnership role of the last two couple of seasons.

Owned by brothers Dean and Adam Bridge who are massive Heathens fans, Motor Market have their showroom on Newtown Lane in Cradley Heath overlooking the original Dudley Wood Stadium site.

Heathens Chairman Nigel Pearson said: "We are delighted to welcome Motor Market back for 2015 and we are truly thrilled that they are coming with us to Perry Barr as main team sponsors."

The Heathens season launch night on Wednesday March 11 at Brierley Hill's Copthorne Hotel. Admission is £5 and tickets are selling well with all profits going to the riders.

Tickets are available from the club website cradleyheathens.co.uk or from the club shop at Printworx, High Street, Quarry Bank.

Duo keep Gornal in running

Casuals 2 Gornal 5

TWO goals apiece from Thomas Pigott and Dreniz Bala ended Wolverhampton Casuals' unbeaten West Midlands League Premier Division run and kept Gornal's promotion hopes alive.

Gornal opened the scoring with Piggott in the 20th minute.

Casuals hit back with Dan Westwood equalising in the 45th minute.

Gornal regained the lead with Piggott finishing off some good work from substitute James Baldwin in the 58th minute. Bala added a third in the 65th minute. Westwood put the home side back in the game. Liam Hickman made it 2-4. Bala claimed his second and Gornal's 5th in the 80th minute.

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Points docking possible for Blues

BLUES may face a possible points deduction after the club's parent company went into receivership.

Birmingham International Holdings (BIHL) has appointed Ernst and Young Transactions Limited to manage the company day-to-day.

The Championship club have quickly eased any fears over their future and insist they are not in financial difficulty and will fulfil their fixtures.

A Football League spokesman said: "The League received notification regarding the appointment of receivers by Birmingham City's holding company."

"We have requested a meeting with the club and the appointed receivers at the earliest opportunity to discuss the matter."

Football finance expert David Bick says Ernst and Young will have to act swiftly to demonstrate there has been no form of insolvency in order to ensure Birmingham are not deducted points. "What counts here in an insolvency event as it's called, is the opinion of the Football League (who will decide) if the club is unable to discharge all of its obligations under league rules," Bick said.

The BIHL board, based in Hong Kong, has moved to end the internal politics.

Baggies offer free coaches

ALBION will offer fans free coach travel to their potentially crucial Premier League game at Crystal Palace on April 18.

The Baggies will run the free travel initiative for the 13th successive season for the visit to Selhurst Park, although the date of the game will change if they reach the FA Cup semi-finals.

The club are laying on 40 free coaches, providing travel for 2,000 fans. Coach tickets can be booked at the same time match tickets are purchased.

With both the Baggies and the Eagles battling for survival, the game could be pivotal to the relegation battle.

The Palace clash will be Baggies boss Tony Pulis' first return to the club he saved from relegation last season.

Tividale in semi after sudden death goal

Walsall Senior Cup Quarter Final
Romulus FC 0 Tividale FC 0 (aet)
Tividale win 5-4 on pens

TIVIDALE will play either Bolehill Swifts or Chasetown in the Semi-Final of the Walsall Senior Cup after overcoming a spirited Romulus side on penalties on their 3G pitch at Coles Lane.

After a string of games on heavy pitches Tividale struggled to get to grips with the home side's slick passing on the artificial surface and they had the best of the first half.

The first chance on goal fell to Romulus

Football

forward Jed Davies but his effort was comfortably saved by Paul Evans making his debut in the Tividale goal.

Tividale did come even closer on 22 minutes when from a free kick on the edge of the box Zach Foster hit the crossbar.

But it was Romulus who were doing the majority of the running and the tricky Edwin Akenkorah just failed to latch onto a long ball on 30 minutes as Evans was alert and quick off his line to collect the

ball. On the hour the visitors made a couple of changes bringing on Danny Ashton and Nigel Penney for Ryan Winwood and Mitchell Botfield.

With Ashton going into the right back role and pushing Chris Field into the middle of the park while Leigh Downing was playing a more advanced role and it was his clever through ball that put Romulus defender Liam Francis under pressure

but Karl Edwards failed to cash in. During the penalties Romulus' Luke Keen scored first. Downing made it 1-1. Mark Branch put Romulus 2-1 up; Edwards made it 2-2. Greg Downes made it 3-2 and Danny Ashton levelled it at 3-3. Barry Fitzharris then blazed his effort over and Andy Parsons put Tividale in the driving seat at 3-4. Akenkorah had to score to keep Romulus in and he made no mistake 4-4. So it was down to Dave Bellis to see Tividale through but he dragged his effort wide to take it to sudden death. Jackson blazed over but Penney made no mistake and Tividale go through.

YELTZ' TWO GAME GOAL DROUGHT

Halesowen Town 0 Curzon Ashton 0

HALESOWEN had to settle for their second successive 0-0 draw in a game of few chances.

The best opportunity of the evening fell for Halesowen's Asa Charlton but he headed wide of the mark from a Tom Tonks cross in the 48th minute.

The opportunity came after visiting defender Joe Guest had earlier cleared over his own bar for a corner.

But Curzon enjoyed more of the possession throughout the game and captain Samuel Walker fired just high in the 13th minute after Jordan Wright surged forward.

Joe Hull clipped just over the bar for the hosts in the 21st minute before a dangerous cross from Darren Thornton after 30 minutes came to nothing for the visitors.

Home goalkeeper Matt Sargeant then blocked well with Simon Woodford in close attention after Walker whipped over a 34th minute free-kick.

The Nash almost snatched a second half winner when Niall Cummins turned the ball just wide from Joe Guest's 60th minute cross and Sargeant made another good blocking save after Cummins latched onto a long ball forward in the 64th minute.

Jordan Wright was then denied in front of the Yeltz goal after 73 minutes.

But the game ended in stalemate as both sides, currently locked at 7th and 8th place in the table and both

Football

enjoying an excellent first season after promotion, effectively cancelled each other out.

Workington 0
Halesowen 0

Halesowen secured a valuable point in Cumbria and in the process stopped Workington extending their winning home sequence to nine in a row.

A combination of poor finishing good luck and a great display by goalkeeper Matt Sargeant made sure The Yeltz didn't make the return journey down the M6 empty-handed.

Connor Tinnion had three good attempts on goal, two saved by Sargeant and one hitting the woodwork.

Scott Allison put a shot just wide for Workington in the second half and then Gareth Arnison headed past the post from Alex Newby's cross.

The best chance, though, fell to Workington substitute Alex Salmon whose 25-yard free-kick was on target for the top corner until Gareth Arnison headed past the post from Alex Newby's cross.

Both the Baggies and the Eagles will be pivotal to the relegation battle.

The Palace clash will be Baggies boss Tony Pulis' first return to the club he saved from relegation last season.

Taken out

Corey's one shot sinks Tipton side
Page 39

Cradley motor

Heathens get new sponsorship deal
Page 39



email: Chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk

Clarke is aware of danger

HALESOWEN super middleweight, Lennox Clarke, is aware of the threat posed by Dan Blackwell as he targets a first professional boxing belt this weekend.

The 23 year-old has recorded six consecutive victories since turning professional in 2013 and although confident of making it seven in a row, Clarke insists he will respect his more experienced foe.

On Saturday, Clarke competes for a British Bronze Masters Super Middleweight Title against the Trowbridge scrapper who, despite being just 21, has 46 professional fights under his belt.

"Blackwell is a tough lad," said Clarke. "He comes forward and will take a shot to land a shot. He's had a lot of fights in a short space of time and you've got to give him credit for that. He's game."

Tickets for Black Country Boxing's 'Triple Threat' in the Stadium Suite at Walsall Football Club are £30 Standard Unreserved and £40 Stage Ringside or £50 VIP Ringside with three-course meal.

Call the ticket office on 01922 651 414/416.

Robins see the lead snatched

Willenhall 1 Dudley Town 1
SUBSTITUTE Matt Dove rescued a point for Willenhall in their West Midlands Premier clash against Dudley Town.

The Robins went ahead on 54 minutes through Rion Francis Mills.

But 11 minutes from time Dove arrived to hook a great finish over the keeper.

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Disappointment for Varnish at championships



Great Britain's Jessica Varnish, right, and Victoria Williamson in the Women's team sprint

CYCLIST Jess Varnish missed out on a medal ride on the opening day of the Track World Championships.

Halesowen Cycling Club's Varnish and Victoria Williamson were eighth in the two-lap, two-women team sprint.

Russia were quickest in 32.518, with the British duo clocking 33.583 in Saint-Quentin-En-Yvelines, near Paris.

Both Varnish and Williamson

are specialist starters, focusing on the first lap, but the pair have been forced to team up - Varnish went first and Williamson second - due to the lengthy lay-off enforced on Becky James.

James, who won two individual world titles in 2013, is recovering from a knee injury.

There was better news for Wolverhampton's Andy Tennant as he helped Britain progress in the men's

team pursuit. Britain's men, who were a lowly eighth in Colombia last year, were second in qualifying to advance to the semi-finals.

Seven teams broke the four-minute barrier, with Ed Clancy, Steven Burke, Owain Doull and Tennant clocking 3:57.716, behind New Zealand, who clocked 3:56.421. Britain

will meet Germany (3:58.861) in the semi-finals, with New Zealand up against Switzerland (3:58.887).

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